

# Miniatures

MILITARY

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ IN REVIEW ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Vol. 1 No. 4, Final Quarter 1994

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## C O N T E N T S

### In Review

#### Strummin' on the ol' Sturmtiger

*Reviewing the hot new Tamiya kit.*

16

#### Big Soviet Pop Gun

*Building and painting the MB Models Soviet 203 Howitzer.*

18

#### Werfer for One

*Reviewing and updating the Italeri Panzerwerfer 42.*

22

#### Bagging a Guderian Duck

*A look at DML's Panzerjager L/70 Zweischenlowsung.*

32

### Features

#### The Mail Bag

*The readers speak.*

3

#### Short Takes

*A quick look at what's new on video, in print, in plastic, and general other stuff for the Military Minded.*

6

#### Double Takes

*Mini reviews of new versions of previous releases. This time it's the JSU-122 and the E-100 both from DML. We also look at the two new Panthers from Tamiya.*

12

#### Mini-Men

*A peek at what's new on the figure front.*

36



Page 16



Page 18



Page 22



### ON THE COVER:

*Tamiya's all new Sturmtiger with a face only a Mutter could love. This one took us all by surprise. It includes an interior, four rounds and link-to-link tracks. The zimmerit is added. See how starting on page 16. The model is pictured in a late war setting composed of the old "Synergy Dioramics" plaster buildings. The figures are Hornet conversions.*

*The inset shows MB Models 203 howitzer smiling for the camera. See page 18 for that saga.*



## From Your Editor



### A Modest Proposal

DML really seems to be cranking out the kits lately. But my question is: where's all the good German stuff in plastic?

I know, I know, there's more to armor than just German WWII. If the truth be known, I like almost everything. Armor in general just fascinates me. But hey, German WWII is very popular (and therefore very lucrative from a strictly business point-of-view) and there are huge gaps in the available vehicles.

So for DML, Tamiya, Ford, GM, or anyone who wants to take it, here's a buttload of free advice. This is my German plastic "Wish List:"

**Panzer II.** The last one done (Tamiya's) was in 1972 or so. This battery operated toy was OK then, but let's get real. All the versions would be well received, like the C or the unusual D model. Release of these kits also opens up the possibilities of SPGs, like the Wespe and the Marder I and II. And dare I say Lynx?

**Panzer III.** Please, please, oh please. Again, the only effort in plastic was Tamiya's mid 70's N model. There have been "cottage industry" versions from Sovereign, MB Models and Gunze Sangyo. But the price tags started at \$75.00 and went up from there. All were nice, but, well... there's no place like plastic.

It would be great to start with the E or G model, and then all of the subsequent models could follow. Once again this opens up all the assault guns (Stug A/B, D, F, etc.) as possible follow-ups. The Sturmgeschütz are coming from DML in the B and F models by the end of 1994, so that's a good start.

**Panzer IV.** This is where DML has mopped up. The Hummel and Nashorn (stop whining—they weren't that bad!), Panzer IV J and the Zwei. L/70 have already joined the line. I'd still like to see an A

or a B model or maybe even an E. Tamiya's D and H weren't bad, they're just not quite up to current standards. We anxiously await Tamiya's all new J model.

**Artillery.** Yes, artillery. Aside from Tamiya's first round (sorry): 88mm, Pak 40 and Pak 38, none of the other heavy guns have been done in plastic. The 15cm (can you say Hummel?) would be the obvious first choice. What about the 105, the 10.5 sIG or even the big 17cm? Do the Wespe and there's your 105 kit—just add wheels. The Pak 41/43 is yet another (can you say Nashorn?). As a matter of fact, DML currently has the 150, the 10.5 sIG and the Pak 41/43 available within larger kits. Artillery is also a good cheap way of spreading around the plastic. Previous releases by other manufacturers (with the notable exception of Gunze) have all been very reasonably priced—even the AFV Club 105's price was down to earth—and that's with a turned aluminum gun barrel. This latter feature would also be a big plus for any future pop gun.

**Halftracks.** We have the 251 and the 250 but what about that big FAMO RV 10 ton monster? And the trailer to go with it maybe? Or how about the "Schwerewehrmascheppler," that weird one from the latter half of the war? The 250 "Neu Art" would also be interesting. And really none of the heavy haulers prior to the 8 ton (once again, from Tamiya) have ever been done in plastic. Even that little 5 ton from ESCI could use a face lift.

**Soft skins.** There are plenty of gaps here. Some fairly significant vehicles have been ignored in styrene. Some suggestions: any of the Steyr heavy cars; the Einheits Diesel truck (recently released in resin from Cromwell), the big Bussing Næg (crane or flatbed) or the Ford three ton. There are other, more obscure choices as well, from Mercedes (like the 4 1/2 tonner) to Stöwer. All, I think, would be popular.

And one last request: please no more concept vehicles! The Maus was nice, the E-100 was OK, and I'll get over the Panther II. But let's stop it there, O.K.? There's too much real stuff to get to!

I think that about covers it. I won't get into the Allied side. My own list there is almost as long. The good news is the manufacturers are really starting to listen. So be careful what you wish for...

### And Now For Something Completely Different...

Welcome to the fourth issue of our very first year. We always knew we'd make it. No, really. I'm serious. Don't give me that look. Stop it.

New section: *Short Takes*. We'll be using this section to review all the "repeat items" that we'll undoubtedly be seeing as manufacturers crank out multiple variants (this year will be no exception, I'm sure). This will also be the place for the many smaller bits like brass and such.

You'll notice the absence of the Book Services section. We have discontinued this service due to intolerable delays from our distributors. This led to constant backorders and lots of unhappy customers. Many of the same hard to find titles will be available through the very capable folks at RZM Imports (see ad on page five). Although their pricing structure differs from ours, they carry a much better selection. And they offer the added convenience of all the major credit cards. So we recommend them for all your book buyin'.

Pat Stansell  
Publisher

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## Annie Get Your Grease Gun

I picked up Vol 1, No. 3 at my local retailer (AAA Hobby Supply, Marietta, GA). I must rate it a first-round "target."

Please don't ever cease-fire.

In reference to DML's US Tank Crew, the M-3 greasegun submachine gun was issued to tank drivers and loaders in the M60A3 TTS Tank, two weapons per tank. This was as recent as 1992 in the New Jersey National Guard. Some regular Army M-1 units still retained this weapon in their inventories at least up to 1990. As far as I know, NJ still has grease guns in their arms rooms.

Most likely the loader (put up to SP4) is about to be sent out to occupy an observation post (or to KP duty, depending on the tank commander's mood!). The M-3 grease gun is still a valid choice for US tanker's weapons.

Keep up the fire!

—Robert Morales

Just received the latest MMR, an excellent issue. In reference to the DML Modern US Tank Crew on page 39 and the appropriateness of the M3 (M3A1) submachine gun with the set. They were fairly common (at least in the Guard and Reserves) until the late 1980's. I was as armored crewman and tank commander on M48s and all of the M60 series (except the M60A2), and we always had the M3 series (usually assigned to two crewman per vehicle (along with their .45s). At one time there was a rumor that we would get the CAR 16 but they never appeared. The main visual difference between the M3 and the M3A1 was that the A1 didn't have a cocking lever. You just stuck your finger in a hole in the bolt, and pulled the whole works back. It's not inconceivable that the M3s showed up in the Gulf War.

—David R. Haugh

Thanks to everyone for that valuable G-2 on the grease gun. We had several excellent responses to our query, unfortunately we only had room for the two.

Still, it is pretty cool that modern tankers are still using something their grand-dads used!



## Price Wars, The Final Chapter

I just received Vol. 1, #s 1 & 2 of your fine magazine. I think between the two issues you managed to review every figure and armor kit I've wanted to build for the last two years.

You asked what was the max we modelers are willing to shell out these days. Well

speaking for myself, \$15 is about as high as I've gone. I started building way back when Aurora was producing 1/48th scale kits for \$1.49 each. I pretty quickly graduated to Monogram's 1/32nd scale kits, at about \$3.00 a pop.

Then when I was about twelve, I came across Tamiya's 1/35th scale Tiger I. I'd never heard of the company, but it was a Tiger, and I just had to have it. I plunked down the \$8.00—a small fortune at that age. I'm 37 and I've been building Tamiya and Italeri kits ever since.

Unfortunately, my income has not kept pace with my enthusiasm. When I saw the price on the new Tamiya II, I thought it must have been a misprint.

I know that the hobby has come along way since I started. Manufacturers are producing better quality kits than ever before, and they have every right to make a profit for their efforts. But at the same time, we modelers shouldn't have to take out a bank loan just so we can continue to enjoy our hobby. Surely there must be a middle ground somewhere?

—Vaughn L. Shepard

Here's another way of looking at the whole price issue.

My step-son and I recently went to the Packer-Viqueen game: \$48.00 for two tickets, \$16.00 for three beers and two Cokes, \$5.00 to park and about \$12.00 for gas for the 200 mile round trip; \$81.00 for an afternoon's entertainment that we really enjoyed. Not cheap, by any means, but not particularly outrageous, either. Same way with armor kits in my mind; and with kits, they provide a lot more entertainment and result in something tangible.

For most of us, I guess a model becomes too expensive if we aren't happy with the finished product or the amount of effort it required. It seems we can live with the cost if it turns out great and it was something we just had to have...

—Pete Samolinski

Yes, the price of plastic kits is a bit of shocker as of late. We're certainly not experts on the subject, but here's why we think they're way up.

**1. Inflation.** Yes it's a trite old argument, but consider that before around 1988, not very many new plastic kits had been released. The last big rush of new kits took place in the late seventies. Inflation on the average has run around four percent per year. Say an eight-year gap in new kits and Voila! Thirty-five to forty percent increase in price. In other words, inflation snuck up on the hobby while we weren't looking.

**2. Plastic = oil.** Plastic is a petroleum-based product. And as everyone who has a car knows well, the price of all petroleum-based products has steadily increased, especially over the last ten years. One good example from the "Aurora Generation" is the GI Joe action figure. Hasbro yanked the doll in the late

seventies primarily because the cost of plastic was going make Joe cost over thirty bucks.

**3. Resin.** Cottage industry kits have enjoyed great success throughout the later part of the eighties. Plastic kit companies took the hint from these manufacturers and began including link-to-link tracks and photo-etched parts. The prices well up accordingly. Perhaps they thought that even at thirty or forty bucks such a kit still compared well with a hundred dollar resin kit.

And remember: it is entertainment (or it's supposed to be). Consider the price of other activities, be they indoor or outdoor, sports, concerts, Nintendo, etc. Modeling does have a great entertainment bang for the buck.

In some ways, we should consider ourselves lucky. Our European modeling brethren continually gripe about their higher prices. And for good reason. Most plastic kits and those resin items not domestically made, run at least thirty to forty percent more, depending on the country. Example: Tamiya's Panther G. U.K. price; £37.50 sterling. That's sixty clams to you and me, dudes.

The good news is that you can still enjoy the hobby on a budget. Many of the staff here frequent IPMS meetings and such, where forty dollar kits often become ten dollar kits. There are also many discount houses out there (APC Hobbies, Discount Hobby Center and a new one; Second Front—see the classifieds) and Squadron Mail Order often has a "Mr. Bo-Bo's Table" of close-out items for really great prices. National and regional shows almost always provide opportunities for bargains as well. Vendors usually come to move merchandise, so it's priced that way.

The moral to the story: being an informed consumer will save you money and aggravation, whether you're shopping for canned corn or Sturmgeschütze. This can mean waiting just a little longer, but it's usually worth it.



How do you choose the kits that you review? I've noticed that you include a large amount of DML releases. Sometimes it's almost like reading the "DML Review."

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Do you favor one company over another? I'm really not complaining, it just seems that some magazines seem to go in one direction. *Military Modelling* in England for instance, seems to favor a lot of English and European products. Any insights?

—Jack Cushingam

OK. Yes we do favor certain manufacturers. Those who make kits you can build (YIKES!). But seriously folks... On the plastic side of your question, yes we do cover a lot of the DML products in these pages. For one reason: DML releases plastic armor kits. And plenty of 'em. It's NEWS baby! They have covered lots of ground not previously covered (and will continue to do so) and that is eminently newsworthy.

Ironically, DML apparently doesn't think much of MMR. In spite of the fact that they have really only received one bad review here, the unofficial word from them is that they don't get a fair shake in these pages. Oh well, I thought we liked them...

We are a quarterly and we do our best to cover as much as we can. Certain companies (including DML and Tamiya) do a very good job of keeping us up to date on their new releases. Any company can do this, but since we're still relatively new, only a few do. It's the squeaky wheel theory. Certain smaller resin companies haven't been given very

much press in the U.S. and therefore attract our attention.

We were just joshing about kits you can build, but we do tend to favor those kits that can be built with relative ease. Or more to the point, those whose problems can be surmounted by someone with average to above average modeling skills. We are not going to report that a kit is unbuildable. This mag is about building and finishing kits and we'll take whatever steps necessary to do that. If something is tough, it will be obvious in the review. We consider each one of our editorial pages to be precious. So we like to fill them with positive reviews. No one wants to read a consistently negative publication, right?

However, our methods are far from scientific, and eventually, you will see many different types of kits covered. We are currently working on some very unusual items. It'll take time, but we'll get around to most of it—sooner or later!

✉

I enjoy reading your magazine, and look forward to each issue, but I have one piece of constructive criticism as follows: I find myself reading the Editorial, the New Product Section (especially), and even the advertisements, but only skim through the articles dealing with the building of a new kit. I believe that the main

reasons for this is that: a) I may not be currently working on that particular kit, and: b) Even if I were working on it, I would most likely refer to the kit instructions. In my opinion, (and I realize that I may be a lone voice here), the readers would be better served with a 2 to 3 page article reviewing the kit, thereby leaving more space for other reviews. But, hey, you may be getting 10 people saying they love this kind of article, and in that case just ignore my suggestion.

—Bo Kauffman

Well, yes and no. We do think that some shorter reviews are good and we've added a new section to cover the briefer pieces pertaining to only "slightly" new kits, like the Tamiya Panthers.

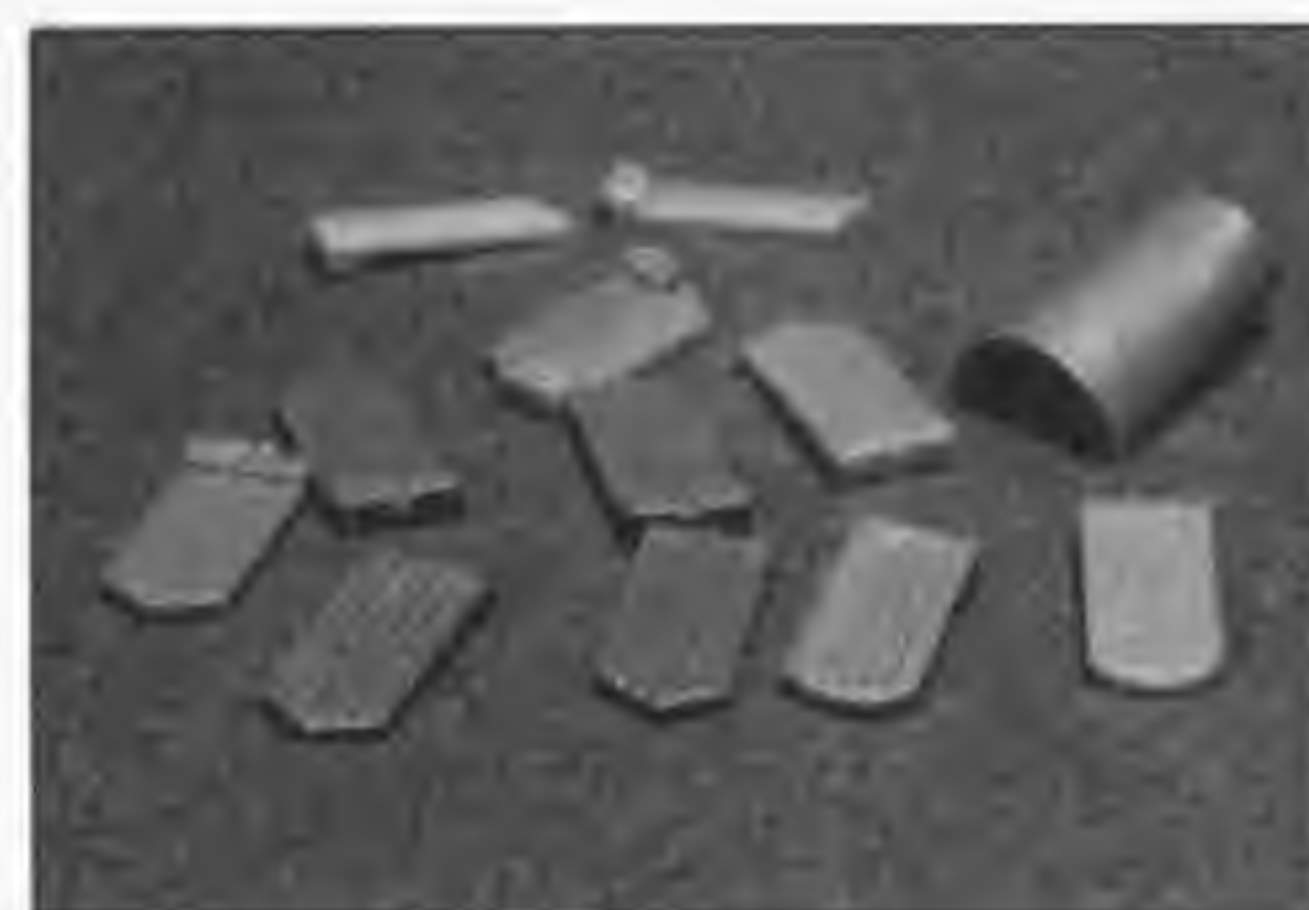
But we think that longer, in-depth reviews are part of what makes us different. Short reviews are the mainstay in almost all the other publications that cover armor. When we started out, we figured that folks would like a little more. So if you're not building a particular kit, set the issue on the shelf and it'll be there when you're ready!

✉

#### Got a problem with any of this?

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# Short Takes

*A brief walk around the hobby proper.*

with contributions by  
Ken Dugan and James Welch



## Book Reviews

### The World War II GI US Army Uniforms 1941-45 In Color Photographs

by Richard Windrow & Tim Hawkins  
Motorbooks International Publishers  
Hardcover with dust jacket, 280 color  
photos, 145 pages.



BOY THAT TITLE IS A MOUTHFUL. We hope that no one out there gets sick of hearing us sing the praises of new books. To us, it seems a waste to list klunkers in these pages. So here we go once again.

The format here is the same as that has been popularized by such magazines as *Militaria* and such Windrow & Greene books as the *Uniforms of the Waffen SS*. A whole bunch 'o geeks get together and play Army. Neat-o...and no one gets hurt this time! A small army of re-enactors have rigged themselves up as GI Josephs with an enormous range of authentic surviving uniforms. All shot against convincing outdoor backgrounds.

The authors have managed to round-up every conceivable item that clothed the U.S. Army in World War Two. All periods are covered, from the very early "Tin-Hats" seen in England, to utilities, tank uniforms, dress uniforms, etc. This book is about as complete as it gets. It really is amazing that even the smallest and most obscure items were found for inclusion in the photos (where do you find World War II chewing gum?). A good deal of equipment and weapons are represented as well. Garands, mortars, MGs, ammo boxes, grenades and gas masks, to name just a few.

As mentioned, all of the photos are in full-color and all are large, crisp and clear. Each uniform item is shown worn within a realistic historical setting or background. The authors appeared to have gone to considerable lengths to do this. Many different locations are shown, including a mock D-Day beachhead and Paratroops loading onto a C-47. The section on armored crews is even complete with an M4 Sherman. You can't beat that.

The book is divided into chronological sections which follow the progression of the war and the development of all the uniform items. All theaters are represented. The book is large format (approx. 9 x 12) and the printing and binding is of the highest quality.

If you're looking for reference on the subject, this has got to be part of your library. It is expensive, retailing for around forty dollars or so. It should be widely available—we found our copy in one of the large book store chains.

If you can't find it locally, Motorbooks is an excellent source for military titles in general, and ordering information can be obtained by calling 1-800-826-6600.

### IS-2 Heavy Tank 1944-1973

Number 7 in Osprey's  
New Vanguard Series  
by Steve Zaloga and Peter Sarson  
Soft Cover, B&W and color  
illustrations, 48 pages.



YET ANOTHER IN OSPREY'S NEW series comes this title by Steve Zaloga. Mr. Zaloga's name will be recognized by all fans of Soviet armor. His work on the subject has been extensive. This volume is similar to his earlier Soviet Heavy Tanks, but much improved.

The new title covers the development of the IS series much more completely than the first book. Many of the very unique and unusual post-war heavy tanks are illustrated both in photos and in line drawings. These are particularly fascinating vehicles. One, called the "Obiekt 279" sported a boat-like hull and four sets of tracks! We'd love to see this one pop up in the scratch built category some day.

Another new feature of the title is the inclusion of seven brand new illustrations by Peter Sarson, including a large cutaway spread. Many of the paintings also include insets denoting specific markings.

The only downside here is the line drawings of the IS-2. These plans were apparently rendered a few years back and do not reflect the most current data of these wartime tanks. The most obvious error is the commander's cupola. All of the line drawings show it as being scalloped, which is not correct. So before you take a Dremel tool to your DML kit, look closely at the photos shown in the book. The DML kit is spot-on accurate in this area and doesn't need any alteration. The color illustrations also reflect this glitch. Other dimensions may be off as well, so check your other reference sources carefully. [An extensive list of references can be found in Vol. 1, No. 2 of *MMiR* and a current set of line drawings is available in *Tank Magazine* #2, 1994.—Ed]

However, the book still is an excellent reference that contains a variety of high quality "in-service" photos and is a fascinating read for Soviet armor mavens. It is well written and thoroughly researched.

The Vanguard books are always a good value with their twelve dollar price tag and are available wherever the Osprey line is sold.

### Matilda Infantry Tank 1938-1945

Number 8 in Osprey's  
New Vanguard Series  
by David Fletcher and Peter Sarson  
Soft Cover, B&W and color  
illustrations, 48 pages.



THIS IS A COMPLETELY NEW TITLE for Osprey, this particular tank never having appeared as the exclusive title of any of the earlier books in the series. *Matilda* is authored by David Fletcher, assistant curator of the Tank Museum at Bovington. So the facts here come

straight from the source.

The title thoroughly follows the development of the Matilda tank from its original concept, to the A11 and all of the A12 marks. Information on the earlier A11 has been rare and the description and illustrations here are quite complete.

The majority of the book is devoted to the later vehicle, the A12. This is the variant that was once available (and may soon be again) in kit form from Tamiya. All of the marks are illustrated in photos. The vehicle is shown in service in the European, African and Pacific theaters. As in all the new Vanguards, there are color paintings provided by Peter Sarson. The cutaway spread shows a very rare glimpse of the interior of a Mark III. Two of the color plates illustrate some of the wide variety of engineer tanks that were derived from the Matilda chassis. These are also covered well in the text and the photos.

All in all not to be missed by Matilda fans. Now if only Tamiya would re-release that elusive "Queen of the Desert"...

### Red Army Uniforms of World War II in Colour Photographs

by Anton Shalito, Ilya Savchenkov  
and Andrew Mollo  
Europa Militaria No. 14  
Windrow & Green Ltd.  
Soft cover, Full color, 64 pages.



WE MENTIONED THESE GUYS AT the top, didn't we? Their previous book on the Waffen SS is the "Bible" for collectors and modelers. This latest title follows the Waffen SS and the two titles on WWI and WWII Infantry.

As in the former, this book showcases surviving examples of wartime uniforms worn by contemporary models (all geeks—to a one).

The development of Soviet wartime uniforms is covered from its earliest origins through the climax of the conflict. All types of uniforms are illustrated from infantry, to medic's, to artillery. Most are photographed against a very appropriate



red background, while others are shown as silhouettes against a white background. The book ends with a large photo spread of weapons and gear, followed by photos of insignia and medals.

The text is by the renowned British uniform historian Andrew Mollo which really completes an excellent package. The release of this book is very timely, coming on the heels of several releases in both plastic and resin of Soviet WWII figures.

For a long time, accurate uniform and equipment info on the Soviet military was difficult to come by, especially of the war years.

Check your favorite military book supplier for this item, priced around sixteen dollars. If you like the direct route, check with: Windrow & Green Ltd., 5 Gerrard Street, London W1V 7LJ, UK. Telephone: 71-287-4570 (from the U.S., dial 011-44 first).

### Dieppe Through The Lens

by Hugh G. Henry, Jr.

After the Battle Publications, 1993

Hardcover with dustjacket, B&W, 64 pages.



AFTER THE BATTLE Publications may be familiar to some of our readers as publishers of the magazine of the same name. Perhaps a smaller group has

discovered their superb series of books detailing many of the major military engagements of World War Two. These books have all been fairly massive works and the titles have included: *Panzers in Normandy*, *Battle of the Bulge*, *Battle of Berlin* and a massive five-part series on the air war over Great Britain (yuck, planes).

The new book is a bit of a departure for them as it covers just one very specific engagement: the ill-fated raid on Dieppe by the Canadian Calgary Regiment (Tank). It's also a departure because you don't need muscles to lift it! Many of the earlier volumes weighted in around fifteen pounds. This volume is a more petite 2 or 3. Don't let the size fool you though, this work is easily as complete as any of its heftier cousins.

The author, Hugh G. Henry, has extracted the

contents from his master's dissertation and the research and documentation is amazingly complete. Mr. Henry tells the story of the raid from its concept in early 1942, through all phases of its execution.

The raid itself is documented through an extensive series of photos which start with an RAF reconnaissance photo of the entire beach just after the completion of the battle. The position of each and every vehicle is shown, as are the positions of the landing craft.

As the book progresses, each tank is shown in its final location and the action of each is described in the deep captions. All of the photos are very clear and most fill the page, which is approximately 11 1/2 by 8 1/4 inches in size. The tanks pictured are Churchill Marks I, II and III. Damier Scout Cars MK II and Jeeps are also pictured.

Mr. Henry has provided a complete list of the vehicles which includes the vehicle sub-unit, name, serial number and markings. The list even includes the names and ranks of all the crew members!

This book is superb. Modelers wishing to represent a model of this raid, or construct a diorama should be advised to run, not walk, to their local bookseller for this title. It is also a must for Churchill devotees as almost all of the photos of the tank are large and show many of the hull and equipment details—especially the deep wading gear carried by all the tanks.

*Dieppe Through the Lens* retails for \$31.00 in the U.S. and is available through Sky Books International, 48 East 50th Street, New York, NY 10022. (718) 359-6969.

### Tiger I and Sturmtiger in Detail

by Bruce Culver and Uwe Feist

Ryton Publications

Hard cover, black & white and color, 168 pages.

THIS NEW TITLE FROM RYTON IS THE COMPANION PIECE to their earlier Tiger I book. And what a book that was. Crammed with every conceivable photo of the Tiger I, under construction and in the field. How does one follow an act like that?

Bingo. They follow it with this book. This volume starts by showcasing the vehicle in the field, with many large, well detailed shots. There



is an impressive array of photos of the vehicle under repair, with many of the interior components shown outside the tank.

There are also several photos of the Bovington Tiger I undergoing restoration. Many shots of the torsion arms and other base interior parts, such as lubrication fittings, are shown in this sequence.

In addition to the Tiger itself, there is a very interesting multi-page sequence of the Fries gantry. This was the huge portable crane that could be used to lift off substantial hunks of the tanks in the field.

The center of the book is largely composed of close-up photos of the various interior and exterior components. These photos are an impressive array of both wartime archival and contemporary photos, many in color. Supplementing the photos and text are three beautiful color plates of both the Tiger and the Sturmtiger.

The Sturmtiger is covered very well in these pages. In addition to tons of wartime photos, there are over eighty shots of a preserved Sturmtiger at an undisclosed museum in Europe. Many of these photos are also in color. WOW.

The cost of the book is \$40.00 and it can be found at your favorite hobbyshop, bookseller or directly from Ryton: P.O. Box 2306, Bellingham, WA 98227. Enclose \$3.50 for postage.

## New Products



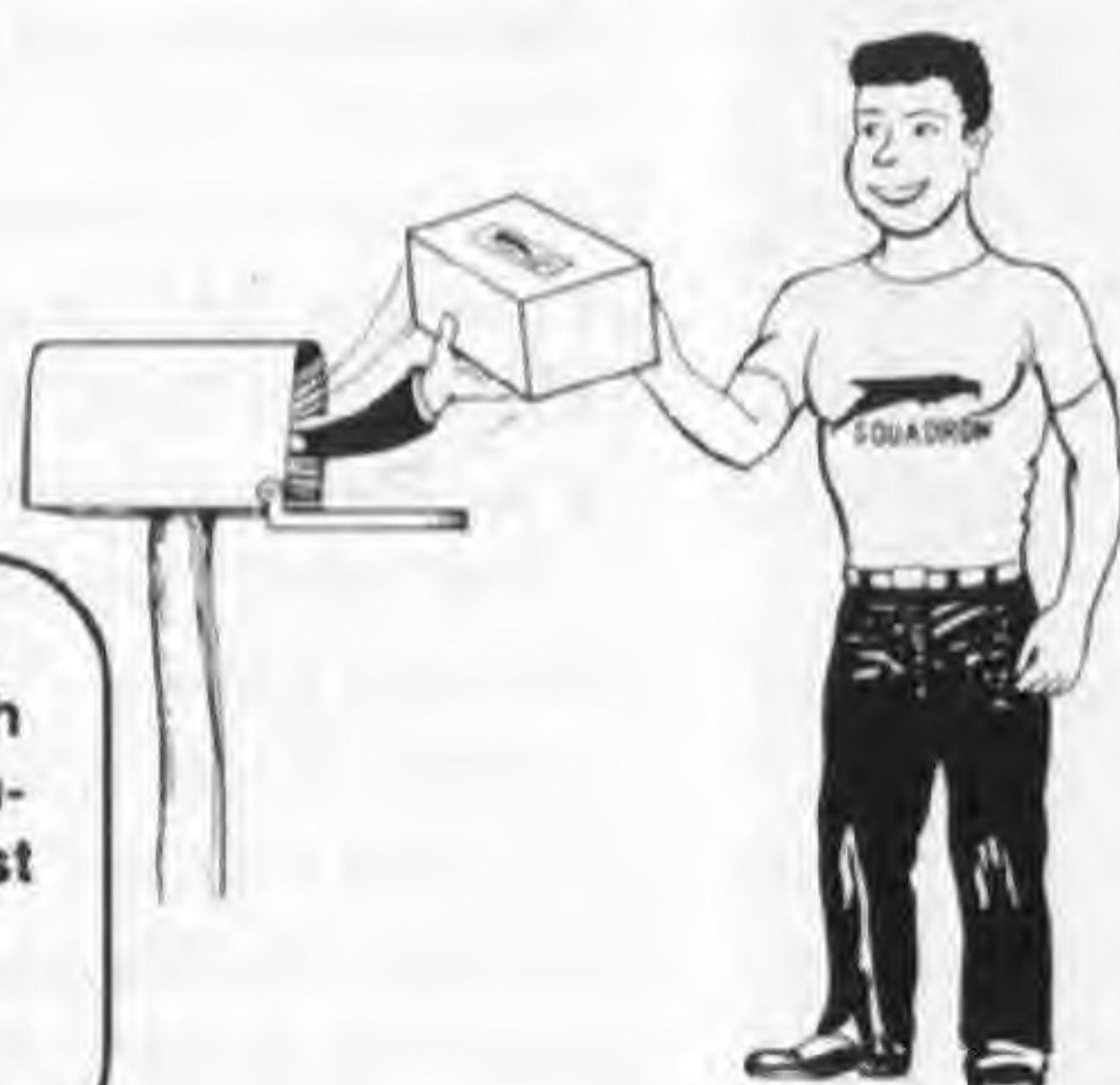
Boy, what a year it's been! Not since the late seventies have we seen so much new stuff released. It seems that the proliferation of resin kits in the last five years has caused the plastic manufacturers to wade back into armor in a big way. It shows little sign of slacking. DML appears ready to go out on a limb and release many of the more unique subjects, while Tamiya chooses its subjects more carefully, none-the-less aiming for big impact. We have the Italians and the

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Russians factored in as well.

It's our general impression that resin companies are also starting to choose their subjects more carefully too. Looking for the ultra unique themes that seem unlikely to ever make it into plastic. Witness railroad guns in both 1/35th and 1/15th scale.

All the hoopla is ebbing as we prepare for the Chicago Model Hobby Show. It's a safe bet that many of the industry bigs are saving the next round of new releases for the end of 1994 or the beginning of 1995. The release of the Sturmtiger has punctuated the end of a very exciting year. Here's all the latest as of this writing:

## ACE

A very new and very little known product line, ACE hails from the Ukraine. Ace means "bee" in Ukrainian. We've only received the one item from them as of yet—a small sheet of photo-etched brass designed for the **Alan/DML SU-76**. The sheet is about 3 x 2 inches and is "double-etched," meaning it has detail etched into the individual pieces. The set includes sixteen different parts, many of which have several multiples.

A very legible set of instructions accompanies the set with clear, concise line drawings—with English captions no less. The set seems to address most of the shortcomings of the kit. Air inlet louvers, brackets, screens, a saw, fender support brackets and the ammo rack for the 7.62 MG are all present.

The price on the sheet is \$4.95 plus .35 for postage. At this price you really can't beat it. There is no U.S. distributor as of yet. Mike Dunlap of Estes Park, Colorado is handling the products until one can be found. You can contact him at P.O. Box 3451, Estes Park, Colorado 80517.

## Circle Distributing

Circle Distributing (who?) has announced the release of a battery operated display turntable. What this is, is a small, attractively designed box measuring six and a half inches square and three inches high. It's topped off with a turntable. The idea is to set your model or figure on top and rev it up.

We were a little skeptical when we first saw it. But after we had a chance to set some models on it and spin it up, it grew on us. The device is equipped with a reducer mechanism that turns it at a very slow, even rate. This keeps your models from flying off! The turntable comes off and it strikes us that one could build a small diorama right on top of it. We like it.

You can order the display directly from Circle at P.O. Box 665, Castle Rock, Colorado 80104-0665. The cost is \$29.95 plus \$4.00 shipping.

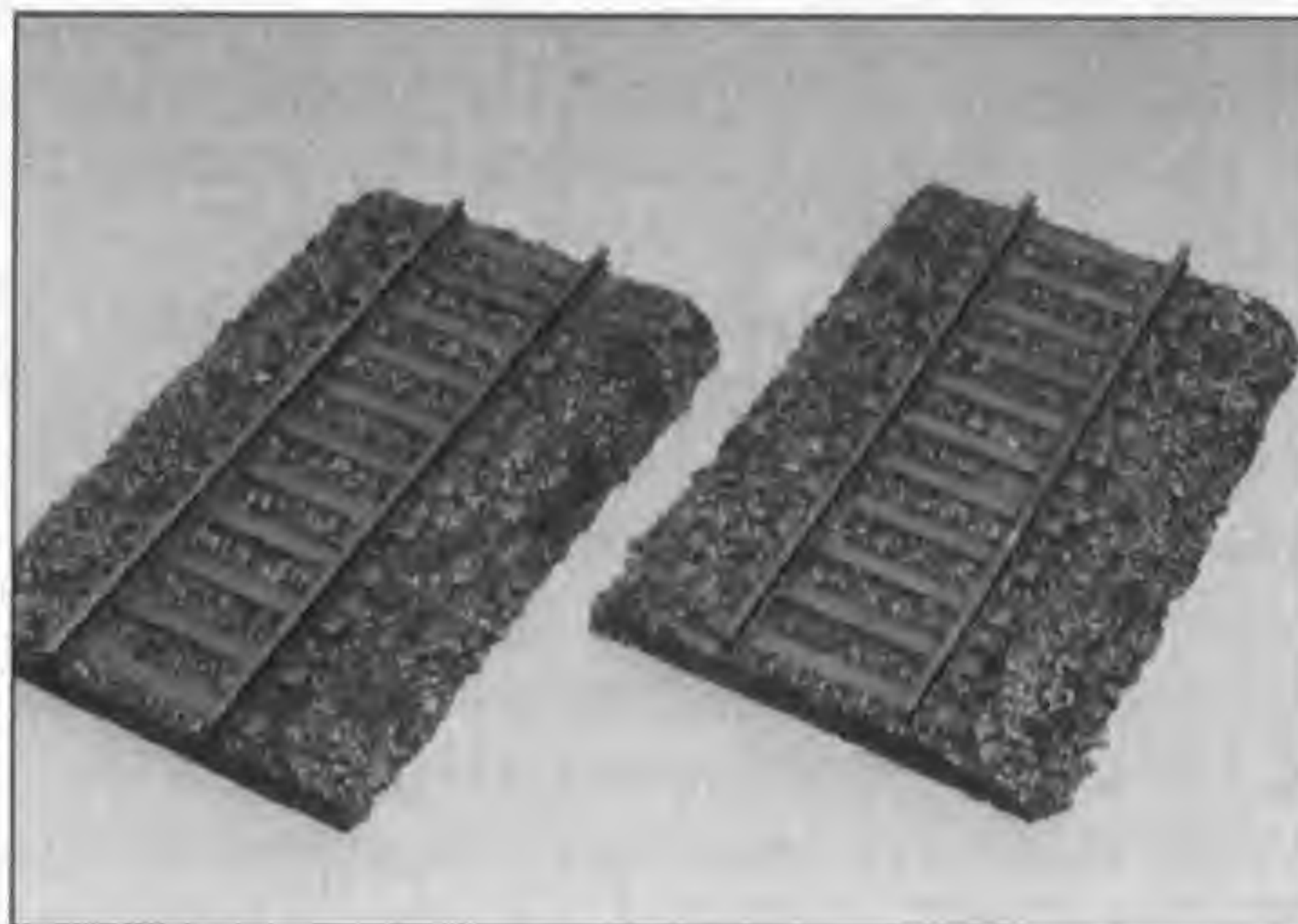
## Custom Dioramics

This Canadian producer of buildings and diorama accessories has just released CD-131



**Stalingrad Ruin** number three. This unit can be attached to its previous counterparts to create a unique (and large!) diorama. \$16.95.

Another new item is: CD-320 **Factory Accessories**. This includes everything you need for the inside of that blown-up factory, including lockers, workbenches, etc. A total of six pieces. \$10.95.



CD-132 is a set of 1/35 scale **railroad tracks**. This includes two plaster sections of railroad bed with the ties embedded and four resin rails to go on top. \$14.95.

CD-15003 is a **120mm Union Officer**. Cast in resin, the piece depicts a Colonel and comes with a choice of two different heads and a plaster base. \$25.95.

CD-35001 is a drop-in replacement turret for the **T-34/85**. This is the early version and the kit includes the turret, hatch, periscope, barrel and brass wire. \$12.95.

CD-134 is a 1/35th scale **Monte Cassino Ruins #1**. This will be the first of a series on this subject. This set will be the first to include glue. A two part epoxy will be included in this item and all subsequent ones at no additional cost.

The Custom Dioramics line is available in the U.S. from VLS Mail Order, Lone Star Industrial Park, Lone Star Industrial Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366.

## Dragon

A late war **Brümbar** is around the corner from DML. Available late 94, this will be yet another spin-off of the Panzer IV. We like this a lot, yessiree—go right down the line. This will be kit 6026 and will retail for \$29.98.

The long awaited **Sturmgeschütz** is on line for November. It will be a B model. The stock number is 6008. No price yet.

Next up is another variant of the Sherman, billed as **M4A3 (76) W HVSS Sherman WW2**. This will be essentially the same kit as the Korean war version (which is a mixture of DML and Italeri), but with the earlier T66 track and an extra bit or two.

Just a slight cautionary note: both Sherman kits are essentially plastic conversions. They contain materials from different manufacturers and do require very slight surgery to go together.

But, you are saving money. The Ironside's kit of the Easy Eight is (was) over one hundred dollars and the Verlinden M51 is up there as well. The DML T-66 version is number 9010 and both Sherman kits retail for \$34.98.

And talk about neato; DML is going into the track business! Announced are both early and late versions of the of the **40cm track for the Panzer IV**. These are stock numbers 3811 and 3812 respectively and both retail for only \$9.98. Way, way too cool.

Also look for the **66cm Transport Tracks** for the King Tiger. These are the narrower tracks that were fitted for rail transport. These are number 3810 and also carry the \$9.98 price tag.

No price has been announced for the **38t Standard Track & Roadwheel set**. This was part of the new tooling found in the Grille kit. These will be fantastic for use with the Italeri 38t or the conversion of your choice. This is a late fall release, numbered 3813.

Along figure way, at the corner of miniature and plastic, are several new sets of teeny ones. A **German Sturmpionier, Kursk 1943** is ready for this fall. This set will depict sapper type troops and will include a mine detector and a flame thrower to go along with. Kit number 6024.

Yet another in the hmmm... department, is this set of the **U.S. 1st Cavalry**. The set represents the typical heli-borne troops seen in Vietnam circa 1965. They'll be outfitted with all the goodies, like the M16A1, M79 grenade launcher, radios and more. The release of this set continues to fuel the speculation that DML (or somebody) is about to release a UH-1 Huey. The armament in their helicopter crew kit was the first hint. The mount for the M60 was obviously designed to go with an aircraft of some type. And of course, heli-borne troops will need a heli to be borne by at some point. Let's keep our fingers crossed. The kit number is 3312. Both figure sets are priced at \$6.98.

Two late editions to the figure line-up are a **U.S. Marines, Korea** set and a **British Special Boat Service** set. The Marines will be dressing in cold weather gear and will be stock number 6802. Price TBA. The Brits are kayak-borne commandos (seriously) and will be stock number 3023. \$7.98 retail.

A new addition to the Quartermaster Series is the **WWII German Infantry Weapons #1**. Oh DML, always the coy ones with the #1 designation. Coy or not, this is a welcome one. The quality of the weapons steadily improved as they released the various German figure sets. This set contains 16 different weapons for a total of 40 newly tooled pieces. Everything's included from Mausers to Stg 44s. We can't wait for #2. This kit 3809 and it retails for \$6.98. Buy two or three!

## STOP PRESS!

DML announces all new M26 Pershing, early Hetzer and Stug F!  
*More in the next issue of MMR.*

## Frontline Miniatures

Frontline has been releasing 1/15th scale items in Europe for quite sometime. They appear to be seriously jockeying for a slice of this new market. To date, they have released some very ambitious products. The line includes a complete **SAS jeep** and a **Soviet T-34/85** (!), as well as ton of 1/15th scale accessories and add-ons.

They have also released what is probably the largest model of anything ever released in







quantity, the **K-5 railgun**. No, that's not a misprint. The K-5 railgun. As un-believable as it seems, it has been relatively popular. 1/15 scale is also the scale of a well known gauge of model railroad equipment, so sales have been happening. One can be yours for around a thousand dollars. Where does one put such a thing? To paraphrase a comment from the British modeling press: "...out of sight of the wife."

The very latest from Frontline is a very complete model the **German 88mm gun Flak 18**.

There's no U.S. distributor for these products, but the UK distributor is Model Search International, Hill House, Top Road, Slindon, Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 0RP, United Kingdom. Complete product and ordering information is available on request.

### Hudson & Allen Studio

More from the producers of that neat barbed wired set from the last issue.

The two newest products are "Ivy" and "Forest Litter." The Ivy set consists of a small packet of leaves and some vine material. The leaves are adhered to the vines with white glue. The vine material resembles a scouring pad, but when it's pulled apart, it creates wonderful vine shapes. The leaf shapes are a little on the creepy side, as the are actual perfect little leafy shapes. How DO they do that? Both the leafs and the vine material are pre-colored and need little or no additional painting when complete.

The Forest Litter product is the same leaf material as the ivy, but it's a brownish color and it's mixed with other fine material to remarkably stimulate the kind of organic trash often found on forest floors. This material would also be excellent to use with static grass to create ultra realistic groundcover in any section of a diorama.

This stuff is really cool. If you do dioramas, you'll have to have it. Both are a great value too, retailing for \$4.95 each (post paid in the U.S.). There's enough material in both sets to yield more than one "museum-quality" project.

Bug your local hobby shop or contact: Hudson Allen Studio, P.O. Box 82341, Rochester, MI 48307-1571. (810) 651-2002.

### Ironsides

The big news this fall, in more ways than one, comes our way from France. Ironsides, which is an extension of ADV/Azimut, has finally released their 1/35th **K5 Railgun**. This will be a limited release item with production held to 500 units. We've seen the master pattern and it looks very, very nice. The side panels are all fabricated from photo-etched brass, the trucks from styrene, while the barrel and other components are made from resin and white metal. Quite a modeling achievement—even



before you take it out of the box.

What's all this accumulated technology going cost you? Well, it depends on who you ask. In Europe, the kit is said to retail for 3,590 French Francs. At the current rate of exchange (as of this writing around 5.20 to the dollar and falling) this works out to about \$760.00 or so. U.K. retail is £399.00 (1.60 to the dollar; \$640.00). The current stated U.S. retail for this beast is \$1,000.00. So you figure it out. Point being, if you want one, be prepared to pay, pay, pay.

### Kirin

A whole lotta stuff from the "son of Dragon." All of it in resin, with the release dates running through the end of the year. Let's start, shall we?

First we have a **Russian Farmhouse**, billed as a typical Russian structure, it's stock number 25516. No price yet.

**Storm Troopers, Eastern Front '44** is a three figure set storming a building. All are dressed in winter gear. Stock number 25018, price TBA.

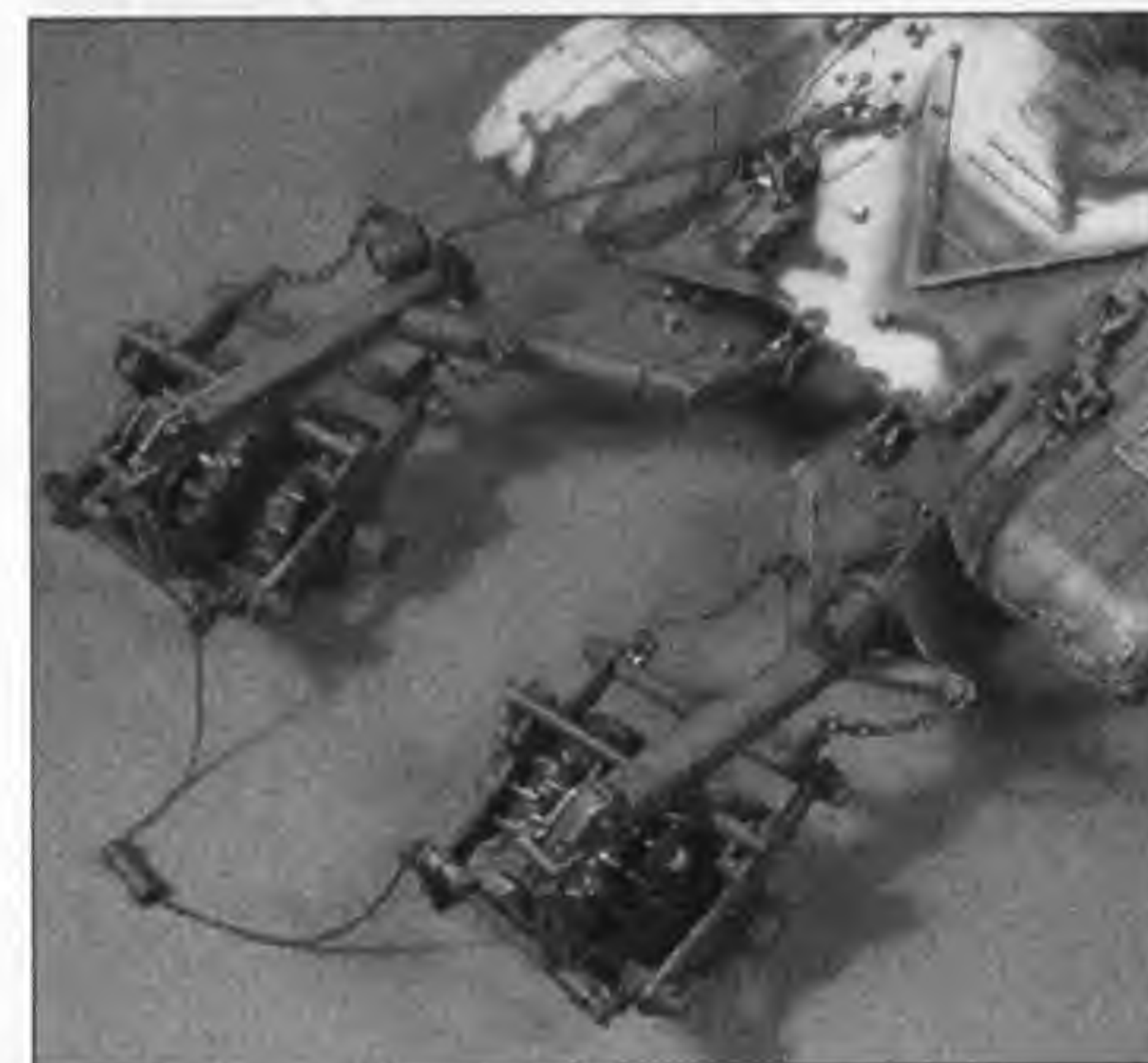
Next is a **Tiger I Late w/Zimmerit** conversion. This includes all the covered surfaces as well as the turret interior. Bonus. Numero 28513, price TBA.

An **M4A1 Sherman conversion** will be number 28518 and will be priced later.

How about a **251/19 Flak conversion**? This will be for the Tamiya kit and is number 28519. No price. There's a crew to go with it too. A separate kit, it contains four figures and is listed as stock number 25017.

Here's a neat one: the **KMT-5 mineroller** for the T-72 and T-80. Product 25021, price TBA.

More little guys: "**Final Defeat, Berlin 1945**, depicts a German soldier surrendering to a Russian trooper. 25020 is another price TBA.



"**The Haircut**" is a two figure vignette of an Italian Barber cutting the hair of a German officer. Product 25019, price TBA.

Switching to the big figs, a 1/16 scale **82nd Airborne Trooper** is rounding the bend. He's a Vietnam-era trooper, complete with M-16, frags and other gear. Product number 21526 carries a \$29.98 price tag.

He can butt heads with the 1/12th **Celtic Warrior, 150 BC**. This bad dude is presented in a battle pose, along with weapons and armor. Number 21008, \$39.98

takes him home.

Another **Michael Wittman** piece, this time a bust in 1/12th scale. Number 29001, price to be announced.



Look for **Cpl. 1st Special Service Force** late in the year. This 1/16th piece depicts the elite U.S. and Canadian forces that served in Italy in '44 and '45. Number 21527.

A magnificent 1/9th scale **MG42 Gunner** is on the way. The master for this figure has been seen at numerous shows over the last few years. It comes from the talented hands of John Rosengrant. It's a stunner. He is dressed (the figure, not John) in the long winter anorak typical of the Waffen SS troops at Kharkov in 1943. He carries the MG 42 at the ready. His number is 22001. No price available at press time.



We've heard that Kirin is moving their production facilities from the U.S. to Hong Kong. Some of the Kirin items suffered from production glitches, which was too bad because the masters always appeared to be very nice. This shift may also be the reason for the delay in some of the more anticipated releases from earlier this year. However, it shouldn't affect any of the items mentioned here.



## MB Models

MB Models recently announced the release of the long-barreled version of their Russian 203mm tracked howitzer. This will be item number MB-1102.

The release of 1102 marks the last armor release from MB for what is described as "an indefinite period of time." What this means exactly, we don't know, but the scuttle-butt is that they are doing this to concentrate all their efforts on their line of 1/350 scale ships.

## Model Kasten

Model Kasten, producers of baskets full of link-to-link plastic tracks, have announced the release of a **Replacement Roadwheel Set for the Panther D** by Italeri. The kit's wheels were one of its weak points and the set will definitely come in handy. Number W03 is scheduled for Fall release and the price is to be announced.

## Osprey/Vanguard

New Vanguard 10 is available now and covers the **Warrior** infantry combat vehicle used by the British. Warrior is authored by Christopher Foss and traces the development of the vehicle through the present day.

Just becoming available as we write this, is New Vanguard 11 on the **M3 Halftrack**. Also authored by Steve Zaloga, number 10 will examine the M3 from 1940 through 1973.

The final item for '94 is New Vanguard 11 on the **BMP Combat Vehicle**. By (guess who?) Steve Zaloga, the title covers the Soviet armored vehicle from the 1960s.

All of the above titles include full color illustrations by Peter Sarson and all will retail for \$11.95.

## Precision Models

This company is little known to most American modelers. They hail from the land of Belgium. They currently offer two variants of the **K18 fieldgun**. It's offered in the familiar 15cm configuration and in the 10cm as well. The protze and other accessories are available "ala carte." Among the accessories are a lifting trestle for the gun as well as various munitions.



Precision Models also offers a **Bergepanzer III** conversion kit for either Tamiya's or Gunze Sangyo's Panzer III. This kit includes resin superstructure parts, a sheet of photo-etch and other bits to create the German recovery vehicle.

Precision Products are available through Squadron Mail Order.

## Ryton Publications

We are positively giddy over the news that the same team that brought you the Tiger I and Tiger I and Sturm Tiger in Detail, will also bring you **Panther**, this Feb. This book promises to be equal to the Tiger book in detail and scope.



## Scale Model Accessories (SMA)

This creative kit maker from the UK has released a **German Sd. Ah 115 trailer** in resin and white metal. This is the trailer seen being towed by the big FAMO half track. It's suitable to haul the Panzer I and 38t. Comes with a figure.

No word on U.S. retail for the trailer. Check with Squadron Mail Order as they are known to stock the range.

## Tamiya

Tamiya seems to be cooling its heels, for at least a few minutes... To go along with the Sturm Tiger, they are releasing an etched screen set for the back end and a set of turned aluminum rounds for the innards. The screen set will also be handy for the Tiger I E. The screens are number 35179 and the Projectiles are number 35178. No price yet.

On line for late '94 is a **German Tank Engine Maintenance Crew Set**. Of course there are two very nice figures included, but the real news here is the injection molded 23.095 liter Maybach HL 230 engine. Pretty cool! Different aircleaners are included to represent one of the two versions used in the Tiger IE, King Tiger, Panther G or the Sturm Tiger.

If that wasn't enough, the set will also include an oiler, oil cans, torch, hammer, screwdriver, box wrench, toolbox, ladder, battery and an oil drum.

The engine set is all injection molded plastic and is stock number 35180.

We anxiously await Tamiya's end-of-year kicker. The last two consecutive Chicago shows came with a big surprise from the T-meisters. Last year it was the Panther and the year before it was the T-72. We, personally, can't wait.

## STOP PRESS!

Tamiya announces all new Panzer IV J.  
*More in the next issue of MMR.*

## Verlinden

Once again Verlinden is a veritable cornucopia of armor and diorama bounty. (what?) What we mean to say is they never stop releasing tons of neat stuff. Here's what we picked out this time:

There's some interesting figure sets coming. Number 948 **Panzerfaust Practice** is a two figure vignette featuring a schutze learning the ropes. \$18.95.

Number 950 is a two-man **Afrika Korps Party**. They're not really partying or anything, just hanging out really. These appear to be more of the former ARA figures which Verlinden is now producing. The ARA range was excellent and we look forward to more. \$18.95.

955 **Arab Boy with Donkey** is sort of self explanatory. The little boy is dressed in such a way as to make him useful in almost any period, from ancient times to modern day. The donkey is the



standard variant. \$18.95.

Verlinden started out doing diorama accessories and they haven't let up in this area. Set 946, **Bathroom Furniture** contains a full complement of fixtures for your average bathroom. Sink, mirror, tub, toilet and even the paper holder are included. We believe this is the first 1/35th scale toilet ever. You read it here first. \$29.95.



956 is a **Blacksmith Workshop** with a firebox, hood, anvil, grinding wheel and workbench. Also includes ceramic wall sections and some photo-etched tools. \$18.95.

VLS Mail Order, Lone Star Industrial Park, Lone Star Industrial Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366.



## What's on the Tubage

We have an update on **The Military Channel**. We were fortunate enough to speak with Mr. Dean Hoke of the Military Channel. Mr. Hoke gave us a little background on their plans for this exciting new idea.

As we have expected, the MC will be programming of an exclusive military nature, with 24 hours of news, public affairs, documentaries, movies and maybe even shopping opportunities ("How much would you pay for this fabulous Panther A?").

The channel is not yet on the air nationwide, but is presently being seen in about three million homes on a test basis. They plan to fully launch in 1995. The biggest impediment so far is the limited number of channels available on many local cable systems. Anyone who's tried to get HBO2 and HBO3 will know what we mean.

The best way to get the Military Channel on your cable box is to pester your local cable company relentlessly. Simply let them know your life will not be complete until you see it glowing on the screen.

That address again is: The Military Channel, 1230 Liberty Bank Lane, Suite 320, Louisville, KY 40222.





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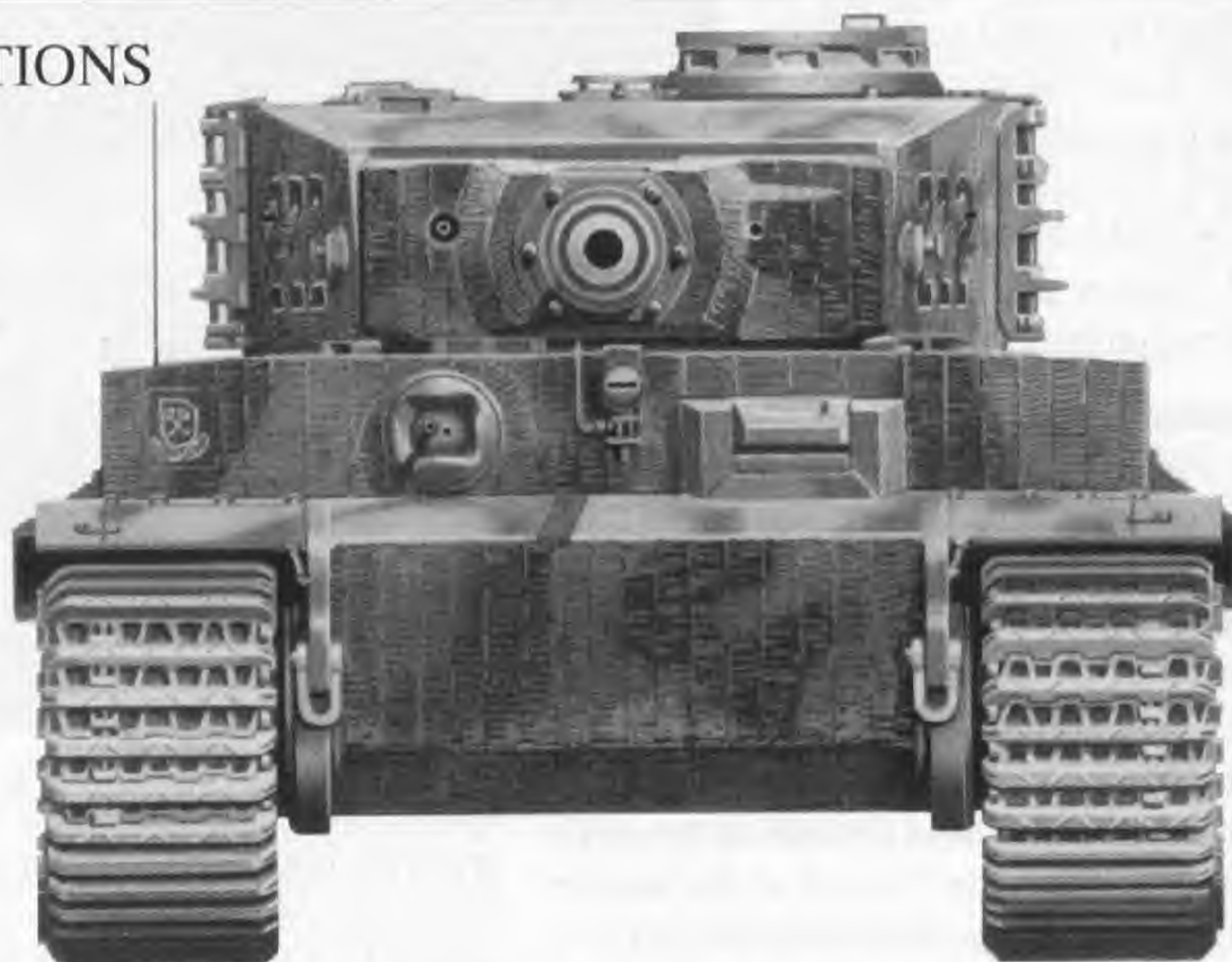
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## Double Takes



**E**-gad this kit's e-normous! OK, I hear you. Don't be an e-diot. Suffice to say DML has done another big tank. The E-100 Superheavy, like the Maus, could even give the King Tiger feelings of inadequacy.

DML's kit contains 308 parts in its usual neutral gray plastic. A great addition to this is a set of photo-etched parts, including the gun muzzle and engine deck screens. The DML E-100 contains the same basic turret and mantlet as their Maus kit, with the addition of the MG ports, lifting eyes, hatches, gun and rear plate that made the E-100 turret unique. The tank's characteristic sloping side skirts are optional and their mounting lugs are depicted on the hull sides.

### Construction

I began with the guns. Like the Maus, the E-100 has not one gun, but two. The main gun halves were straight and true and went together with no problem. There was a bit of difficulty fitting the photo-etched muzzle shroud to the barrel. The instructions say to bend the tabs at the part's ends and fit them in the slot at the muzzle brake underside. I annealed the metal part so it would bend more easily and fit to the muzzle. I found that using the tabs would not permit the shroud to fit tightly to the muzzle. The tabs were cut off and the problem subsided. The seam was filled with putty and sanded smooth. The guns were then installed.

### Turret

My sample had a warp under the front

end. This causes a bow when the turret is placed on the hull. Try to correct the flaw before attaching the turret floor.

DML did their homework when researching the E-100's details. They included all necessary fittings to make the turret true to Nazi E-100 specs. Ball machine gun mounts replace the Maus pistol ports, a large square plate replaces the conical shell loading part on the turret rear. The hatches for the gunner and commander (and probably up to 40 passengers) are ever so subtly reshaped. DML even provided a new half for the 75mm gun minus the attachment point for the antenna guard.

### The Hull

The hull is of simple box construction. The upper and lower hulls are flat pieces containing upper and lower glacis plates at the front end. The back plate (A3) fits well into the hull, once one discovers how its supposed to install. The easiest mode of construction is to put the sides on the bottom, then the back and finally the top.

The engine deck is nicely detailed and is

appearance.

The suspension is similar to that of a large Tiger II. It contains a lot of parts, but is a cake walk compared to the suspension of the Maus. The torsion spring units (D11) contain serious sink marks underneath. You could fill all twelve or just let them go, as they are barely noticeable. The wheels go on with no problem, as do the idlers. It's easier to not to attach the drive sprockets at this time to facilitate adding the tracks.

### Painting

The best part of a concept vehicle like the E-100 is that you are free to choose any paint scheme you want. I decided on a late war ambush scheme.

I sprayed the model overall black. Next the lower hull areas and suspension were painted a deep brown. After the brown had dried, I sprayed the hull in a splotchy cloud pattern of dark yellow. Afterward the upper hull was mottled in medium green and red brown. The side skirts were painted a matching pattern, but left off the hull until later. When all the paint was dry, the



reminiscent of a Tiger II's. Some sink marks are evident around the cooling fan housings. These are easily filled. The engine access door (A10) fits like a glove. A Verlinden Tiger II or Panther engine could be used to create a realistic engine compartment.

DML has done the modeler a big favor including photo-etched engine deck screens. Finally the modeler doesn't have to shelve a new kit for a month or two until the aftermarket parts catch up. The screens fit well and really enhance the model's

ambush dapple pattern was applied with a pointed brush. Photos of some ambush schemes show the spots to have been either triangular or hourglass shaped. These seemed to produce a more realistic appearance than just dots. Dark yellow was dappled over both brown and green and a mix of green and brown were dappled over the yellow. The critical thing in applying the spots is to make them uniform. Too many dapples will make the scheme look fake.

The model was washed lightly with



black. More heavy black washes were applied to the roadwheels. The tracks were appropriately painted Humbrol Track Color then pieced together and fitted to the model using Testor liquid cement. The side skirts were added afterward.

To highlight the unusual bolt-on skirts, I cut off the left center plate and added tubing in the attachment lug to simulate bolt holes. The dapples were left off the unshielded side to provide contrast and add character.

The camouflage colors were dry-brushed, section by section with lightened shades of their corresponding colors. The tracks were drybrushed silver and the entire vehicle was brushed over with a very light buff shade to bring out detail and unify the confusing paint scheme. Exhausts and gun muzzles were lightly sooted up with black pastel chalk.

DML's E-100 kit is a welcome addition to the collections of those modelers fascinated by German wartime technology. It's big, it's well armed and shares a family resemblance with the Panther and King Tiger, not to

Second in DML's epic Stalin series is the JSU-122. Why the JSU and not the ISU? JS has been the most common way to refer to the series. The JS moniker seemed to stick in the English speaking world. But, do to the fact that in the cyrillic alphabet Joseph Stalin's name is correctly spelled with an "I" (Iosef) it gets confusing. So we could get literal here. If you think about it, in this vein, the KV tank should be the "KB" tank. Anywho, you all figure it out while I go to Joe's Diner for a cup of coffee.

The JSU was a potent fighting vehicle. Combining robust mechanicals and a deadly gun, it was the second vehicle after the SU-152 to earn the title Zvierboi (animal killer). This was due to its uncanny ability to crack open German Panther and Tiger tanks.

The kit is molded in, guess what, neutral gray styrene with metallic black tracks. The parts list amounts to 429 pieces most of which seem to be the tracks. Not only has DML produced a nicely detailed kit, but also their eye for detail is improving.

Basic construction began with doctoring

The lower portion of the fenders was then blanked off. Given the low clearance between the tracks and fenders, this may not have been necessary. However, light shone through the engine deck. There is too little clearance between the kit's return rollers and fenders. Measuring from plans in *Tank Magazine* 2/94, the space ends up about 3-5 scale inches short. While this degree of error is minimal in scale, it shows up when the tracks are put on. My suggestion to the modeler would be to shim up the upper hull with .030 - .040 strip styrene.

The detail and molding of the upper fighting compartment is fantastic and very realistic. Topside, the kit was built as per instructions with one exception. Warning: DO NOT open the holes in the rear plate for the travel lock. A travel lock, while called for in the instructions, would hardly have done the JSU any good, unless the gun was made of rubber. Scrap A3.

The pioneer tools and fittings were very precisely done and used stock. The fuel drums were a bit on the weak side, so in a severe fit

of modelmania, I turned replacements on my lathe from resin blanks (I'm OK now). I also fabricated new straps from thin brass strip. Several photos I've found show unditching logs being carried in place of tanks on one side. I made logs from basswood dowel and strapped 'em in.

Up front, the spare tracks were left off and replaced with empty brackets. These were made from .030 x .060 strip plastic and brass stock. The splash guard (A9) was reshaped to look like one from an JSU and not a JS. The cutout at the top of the splash guard should extend all the way to the right fender bracket. This allows clearance for the gun. Finally the

headlight lens was replaced with a clear one from a car model (yes, they're good for something).

The kit was painted in an olive green over medium green over black cloud pattern. It was then washed with black/burnt sienna gauche. Kit decals were applied. The model was then dull-coated and I set to work on weathering.

I wanted a battle weary look, so I decided to try pastels. They worked great up until they came in contact with the markings. There they acted like a police



mention the Maus. Aside from a few warps and sink marks, the kit is very good. Another bonus aside from the photo-etch, is the chance to finish the tank in any scheme desired. Along with the opportunity to be creative, the modeler gets to do something the Germans never did... finish the E-100.

—Eric Knight

**DML German E-100 Superheavy Tank**  
**Kit #6011, retail price: \$45.00**



the hull. Although DML has come along way, they still insist on molding engine deck grills into the hull. These parts were thinned from the back and cut out. The screen cross braces were replaced with .030 x .010 strip styrene. My vehicle has front/back braces atop the side to side ones. Check your sources as different vehicles, well... differ. On-the-Mark Models engine deck screen was then laid in under the braces. Care must be taken not to touch those parts during assembly—they're easily detached. In fact, after about the fifth time, I almost detached my hands.



**Panther G**



fingerprint kit and clearly outlined the borders (hitherto invisible) on all the decals. At this point I took a short break.

When I couldn't cry anymore, I took fine sandpaper and took down the decal edges. Some spot painting was necessary to touch the finish up. The pastels were then used to the desired effect. Fortunately for me, the model was supposed to look battered, but for future references, I'll be using dry transfers or paint with pastel weathering.

DML has again filled a void in the plastic kit market with its JSU-122. Better yet, the kit is accurate and well detailed. Aside from the molded-on engine deck screens, slightly too low lower hull (nitpick) and bogus travel lock instructions, it's well worth having. And for all you die-hard Tiger and Panther fanatics; which vehicle do you see rolling down the streets of Berlin in 1945? The Zvierboi!

—Eric Knight

#### **DML JSU-122**

**Kit number 6013, retail price \$29.98** 

**T**here's not too much to write home about on Tamiya's second and third Panther kits. Each is basically the

same as the first early G we saw in the last issue of MMR.

The first of the two is the Panther with "Stahlrollenlaufwerk: or steel wheels.

The kit contains all of the same parts as the early G, but adds three extra sprues. Each one is identical and they contain the steel roadwheels, six ice cleats, six periscopes and one set of infra-red gear.

The cleats should install onto the spare track links provided. These were used for icy conditions and were installed on about every four of fifth link. When not in use they were stowed on the spare track brackets.

The instructions show the spare periscopes being installed around the circumference of

the commander's cupola. I don't believe this is correct, as the cupola employed direct vision devices. Even though you can't use them, they're still great little parts and will be useful for many other projects. These *are* the correct ones for the other spots in the tank.

The infra-red gear was part of a night-fighting system that the Germans introduced in late 1944. It was composed of IR lamps which could project a beam and an ultra sensitive sight to pick up the objects illuminated by the beam. The devices were mounted on Panthers and a large IR searchlight was mounted on a 251D halftrack. This was called the "Uhu" or Owl by the Germans. The general idea here being to "light-up" large portions of the battlefield with the search-

light, thus allowing IR-sighted vehicles to join the fray. All of this was virtually invisible at night and this made the system particularly frightening in its day. Fortunately for the Allies it appears not to have been widely used, although photographic evidence suggests that at least one platoon of Uhu half-tracks was deployed in early fall of 1944. Records also state that IR Panthers were among those that fought in the Ardennes, but actual details of their use is sketchy.

The U.S. Army further developed this technology after the war and now it's one of our most effective. Many of the burning hulks seen strewn

**IR Sight**



**Panther with Steel Wheels**





across the Iraqi desert, were engaged and destroyed using IR devices.

At any rate, the IR sight is the coolest part of the kit. It takes all three sprues to make up the full set of steel wheels. But, obviously only one of the IR sets is needed.

The sight mechanism is a real gem. The molding is up to the usual Tamiya standards. The nicest bit is the IR lamp, which is complete with its finely woven mesh on the lens.

All of the parts go together extremely well, but be cautioned, many of the parts are really small and delicate. Of course, if you lose a part, there are two more!

About the only thing you might want to add is a piece of fine wire leading from the IR projector (that's the long thing) through the turret hatch (to the power supply).

When the unit is complete, it mounts under the lip of the commander's cupola, much like the real thing. One has to wonder how exactly they fought with this device poking out of the hatch. It looks like maybe you could swing the hatch closed part of the way.

The big bonus is, of course the fact that the original dished roadwheels are still provided, so you have the option of building the kit either way. You also have two complete extra sights left over, along with the periscopes and the ice cleats.

Be aware that steel-wheeled Panthers (I far as I can tell) were not fielded with the IR sight. The one photo I've seen of the device fitted to a Panther was to a dished-wheeled tank.

The wheels, incidentally, are dead-on accurate. these are NOT the wheels from the earlier Tiger I or Tiger II. Those of you who used these for a previous conversion, go to your shelves right now and take them off. I'll wait. O.K., now that that's been taken care of, realize that the Panther was outfitted with a wheel especially designed for its use. The said wheel was actually larger than the Tiger wheels.

All in all, this kit was a pleasure to work on and it definitely represents the best value of the three kits due to the fact that there is so much extra stuff left over when you're done! The price remains the same, so if you want the early G this might be the only choice.

The Panther G, late version from Tamiya is again the same basic kit. However, this time around, rather than extra sprues being provided, the original sprues have been modified. This is Tamiya's advanced molding technology that we have heard so much about. It's pretty neat. The method is to remove or add certain sections of the mold to alter the parts produced on the sprues.

In this case, it the inclusion of the unique parts that distinguished the late G. These parts

are the updated "chin" mantlet, the large raised fan cover on the rear deck and the prominent circular muffler housings. This latter item was designed to suppress any flames the Panther might produce from its exhaust, thereby preventing the tank's position from being revealed, especially at night. The late G's also had their jacks stowed vertically between the exhausts, instead of below and this accommodation is present in the kit.

Another new feature for this kit is two new crew figures. One is posed gazing through his binoculars, while the other is posed cautiously looking up in the sky. Both are full figures and I must admit that at one time I just chucked the figures provided in Tamiya kits. But the latest round of releases have all had pretty respectable little people enclosed.

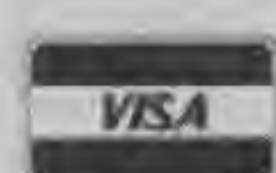
I liked the late Panther every bit as much as the other kits, but I was pining away for those great link-to-link tracks that are available for the Panthers. I was really hoping to see them inside the box and I felt the forty-seven dollar price tag could have been softened ever so slightly if they had.

—Pat Stansell

**Tamiya Panther Steel Wheel, kit #35174**  
**Tamiya Panther Late G, kit #35176**  
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# Snub-Nose Tiger

**Tamiya gets ugly with a big-nosed version of the Tiger I**

**S**turmtiger. You have to say that with a thick Germanic accent. You know kinda suck in your lower lip; "StttuurmTiega." Hans and Frans might have this to say:  
Hans: *"I like the StttuurmTiega. It is not a little girlie tank. It is a manly, Swartzeneggerian type tank. Don't you think so Frans?"*  
Frans: *Ja!*

It is pretty big and bad looking. Arnold's car may be a HUMVEE, but I'll bet if he drove a tank, he'd drive a Sturmtiger. And he'd load the shells by himself. "I'll be back—wid my StttuurmTiega..."

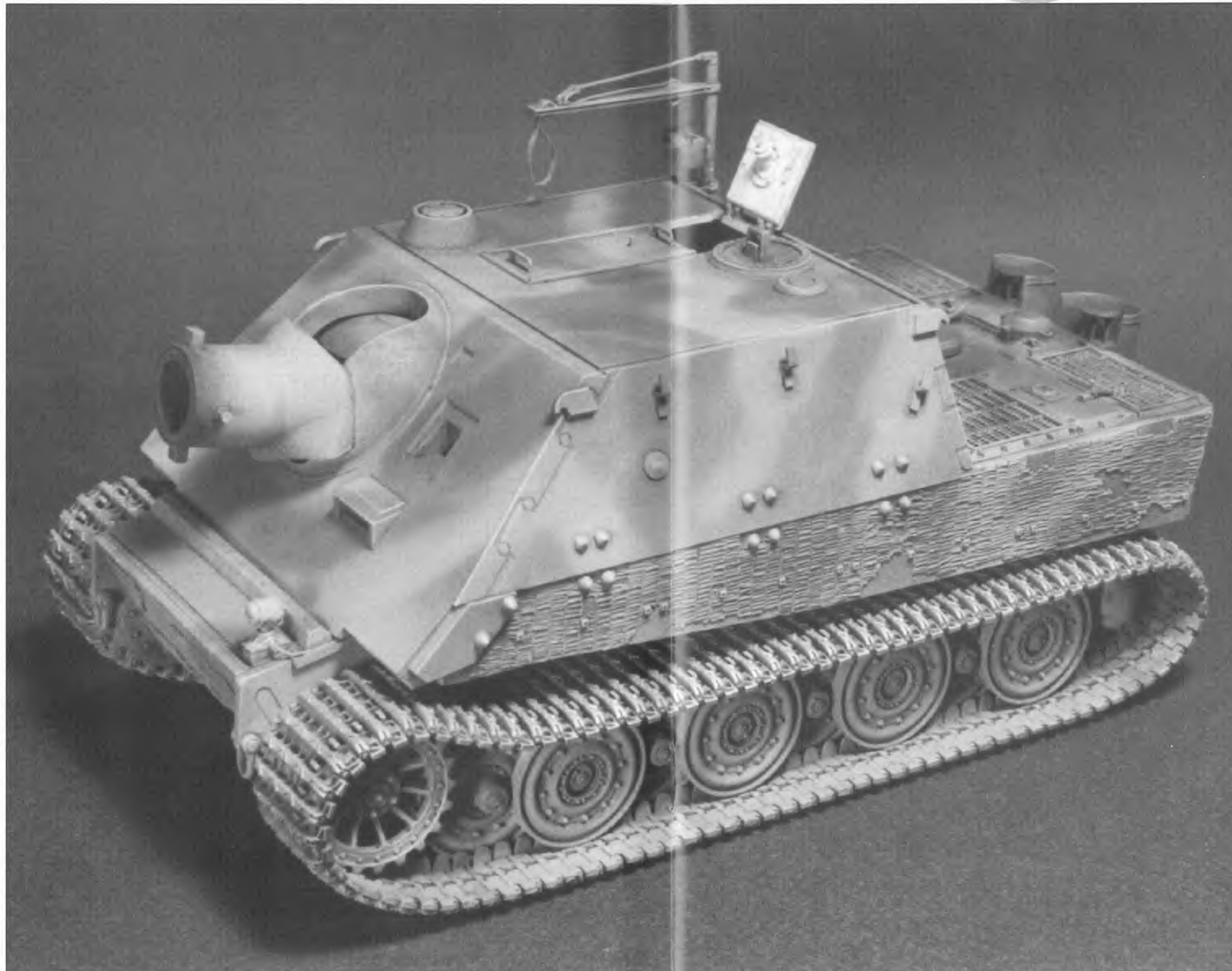
The official designation was 38cm RW61 auf Sturmörser. Quite a mouthful. And quite a vehicle. A positively enormous Naval mortar was plopped down into one of the largest tanks the Wehrmacht stable. Viola! Big ugly tank. The vehicle's design was inspired by the close-in street fighting that had taken place in Stalingrad. Arriving just a scant eighteen months too late, the Sturmtiger could throw its huge projectile up to six-thousand five hundred yards, depending on the temperature. Apparently, the projectiles were sensitive to the weather.

The Sturmtiger is hot off the press from Tamiya. Rumors have been going around about its release for years. I can't say why they waited so long. It seemed like the logical next step after the Tiger IE. Well, the kit's a stunner. There was a lot of speculation about the composition of the kit around here and I, for one, wasn't disappointed.

This is not your father's Oldsmobile—the kit is very different from the earlier model. The only sprues that remain the same are the two suspension sprues and the three track sprues. I was happy to see the tracks included. This made the earlier release a very good value. The rest of the kit is different. The large single piece lower hull has been modified with the addition of those distinctive large lugs and the side skirt retaining bolts. This gives you the opportunity to leave off the skirts without having to fill the holes that were present in the first kit.

The other sprues are one hundred percent new

*From top to bottom at far left: a peek into the top of the tank, with the large rectangular hatch removed; the left side of the winch; the right rear of the winch; one of the large shells visible through the rear hatch; the upper rear hull all buttoned up; the back end showing off those On the Mark Models fender frames. At left: the big guy in all his glory... the zimmerit pattern is quite noticeable. The method of chipping it is described in the text. Interestingly, all the camo painting on the Sturmtiger was accomplished with pastels rather than an airbrush.*







*The bottom hull is nearly identical to the earlier kit. The major difference is the detail on the sides.*

tooling. The large upper hull, an interior and a fully detailed mortar are among the many new parts.

### Konstruktion

I followed the instructions pretty much to the letter. As always, I used Testor liquid glue for most of the parts and superglue for the weeny bits.

The suspension is pretty much run of the mill stuff. If you've built the earlier Tiger kit, you'll find no surprises. The construction

is blissfully simple for the first time Tiger builder. Most of the time spent is removing all of the many parts from the sprue and cleaning up the small bit of plastic splodge on each part. This is always a pleasurable experience (more or less) on a Tamiya kit. The injection points are small and flash (not to mention splodge) are almost non-existent.

The torsion arms are neat because each fits over a small pin on the hull which keeps it level. Clipping off this pin means Articulation City man. You can make your Tiger conform to any terrain, if you so desire. I opted for no such excitement and continued the building process.

I left off parts C35 and C34 in step two of the instructions. These are the detail panels for the final drive on the inside of the front hull. I did this to accommodate the application of Zimmerit later on.

The suspension went together well and the finished effect is very keen indeed. Like all of Tamiya's new armor releases, the hull and suspension are fully detailed, right down to the correct openings beneath the final drive.

As I mentioned at the top, the link-to-link tracks are included and they go together super nice. This is how it's supposed to be. Each link fits together nicely and the finished tracks look very accurate. On the down side, there are small sink marks on each track link. They're mostly hidden by the roadwheels, so leave 'em iffens you wants to. By the way, the sprue points on the tracks are fine enough that if you cut them carefully, you'll have little or no additional clean-up.

The instructions say to use 100 of the little buggers on each side, but I did mine a little differently. It turns out that 100 is a little off. I

used about 102 on the left and on the right to get the sag I desired. Not to worry, there's a ton of extras for spares and experimenting. I made four half-runs, let them dry for about 15 minutes and then worked them around the suspension. I like to leave a top and bottom link unglued so that the tracks can be lifted off for painting.

### Der Gross Gun

While the suspension was drying, I began to deviate from the construction sequence suggested in the instructions. I skipped to step 15 which is the mortar itself.

This is really the highlight of the model. It's extremely well-detailed with elevation wheels and mechanisms and goes together just beautifully. All the parts fit and the only complaint I had was that the interior of the gun barrel lacked its characteristic rifling. This was an obvious feature and I'm fairly shocked that Tamiya would miss this. Oh well, they've got to leave something for the aftermarket people to do.

You've got a couple of options on the weapon. There's a choice of the mammoth counterweight for the outside end of the barrel or four rather mysterious protuberances. I'm not sure what these were



*Top: the main sprocket, the final drive and the rear idler wheel. Above: the very nicely detailed floor subassembly.*



*The bottom of the main hatch showing the Nahverteidigungswaffe close-in defense weapon.*

for. I'll speculate that they were some kind of lifting lug. There are no locating points for these, so place them carefully. The instructions do give dimensions for their proper placement. The other option is the placement of the breech door open or closed. One interesting point about this is that with the door open, you can see all the way into the tank. Consider this if you want a little more light in your interior.

The gun exhibits realistic casting detail everywhere. The large ball mount even shows its parallel tooling marks. Once the gun is assembled the interior and exterior are tied together with copper screws and nuts. This is common in Tamiya kits and I always regard it as a little weird. But, it does work well. The screw heads are virtually impossible to see when the model is buttoned up.



## Interior?

Yes the Sturmtiger does come with a fairly complete interior. All the major parts are represented and the only areas not fully rendered are the driver's and radio operator's positions. There is just a seat and a wheel for the driver.

I built the rest of the interior now so that I could paint and weather it before completing the rest of the vehicle.

The floor is a one piece deal and the loading cradle is mounted in the center. Make sure you add the floor first. I tried to add the floor after the back firewall and found it just wouldn't go in this way. The ammo racks and front hull braces were added next. When the whole thing has set up, I sprayed everything off-white including the interior portion of the mortar and the hatches. When this had dried, I gave the whole area a wash of diluted black acrylic paint. When this was dry, I oversprayed a little more of the off-white and then drybrushed with straight white.

Four shells are provided in the kit and they have been rather remarkably molded straight up and down rather than in half (like an airplane—ugh!). The top half is a separate piece so just cap them off and away you go. There's two different types of rounds. One has a charge in the tip and three do not. One note from Professor Accuracy: if you're going to show your Sturmtiger with a round in the crane, make sure it's one without a charge. The charges were pressure sensitive, so they were only added once the round was ready to fire. One good bump and Sturmtiger go boom.

Some nice little decal stenciling is provided for the rounds. I painted mine dark green (remember, I'm the king of Polly-S), then put on a coat of gloss finish. I added the stencils on top of this. The decals need to conform to the top of the shell, so you'll need the extra help the gloss provides when working with a setting solution. I used Micro-Sol. I applied it several times to make sure the decals were nice and flat. After the shells had dried a few days, I hit them with a couple of coats of Testor Dull Cote.

I didn't weather the shells because I wanted nothing to make them less noticeable when seen through the hull hatches. I attached the shells in their cradle with white glue. The charged shell went in the loading tray.

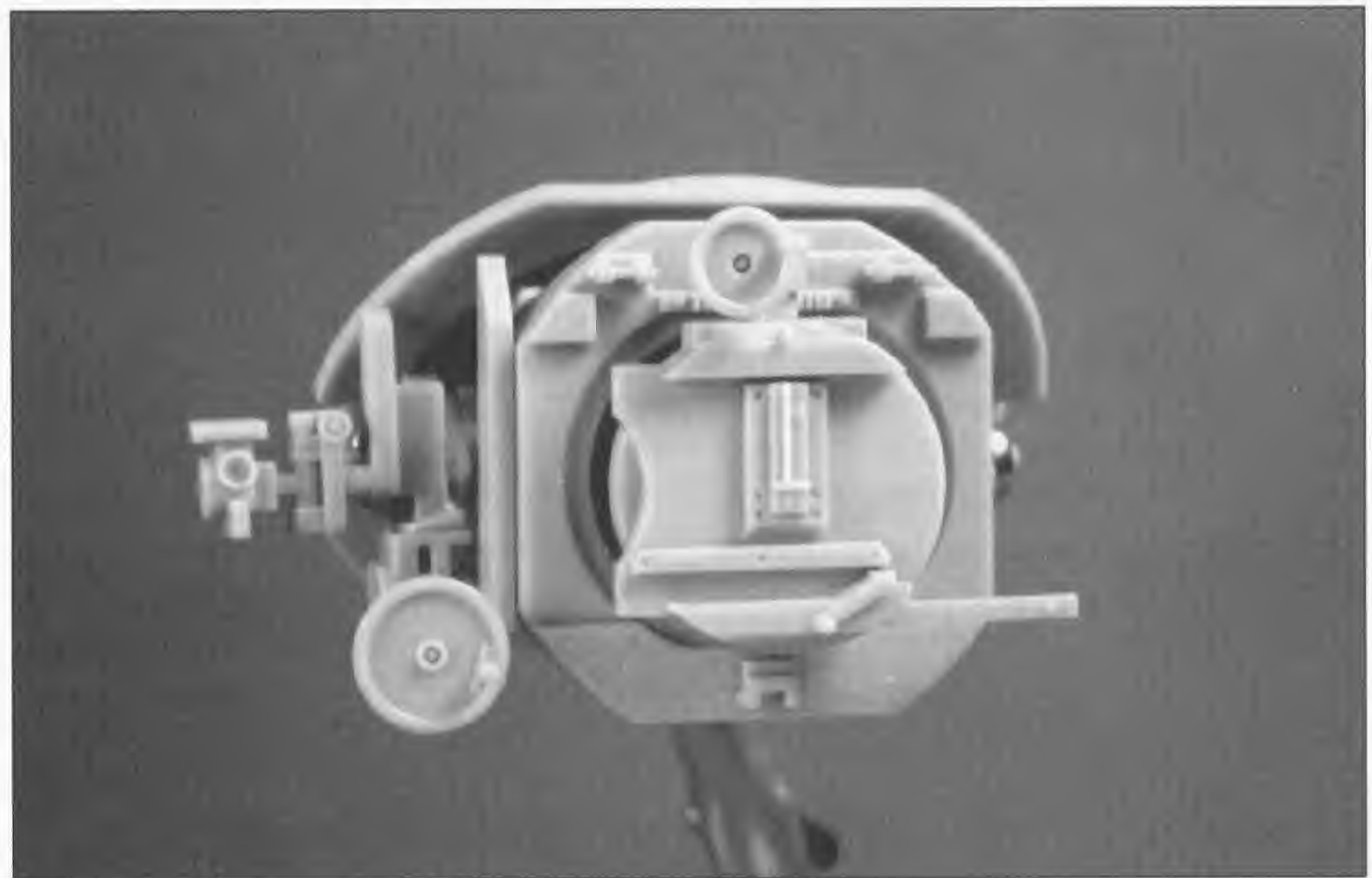
At this point, I turned my attention to the zimmerit and the hull details.

## Zimmer Your It

I left off all the exterior goodies in anticipation of adding zimmerit. But before I



*The beautiful mortar assembly. Tamiya really out did themselves on this one. Note the casting and machining detail of the ball mount in the shot above. The shot below shows the intricate breech end.*



got to the lower hull (Sturmtigers usually only had zimmerit on the lower hull), I completed all of the upper hull assembly. The upper hull has more of that yummy casting detail. It all looks just like rolled armor plate.

All of the upper attachment bolts must be added. Man, are they teeny. I picked up mine with a brush moistened with liquid glue, then guided them into place. Don't loose any—there's no spares. Beware of tweezer launch.

Another of the new details is the new cast cover for the engine hatch. It contains the small star-shaped bolt and it has a rough texture. On the previous kit, this item was butt-smooth and lacked the bolt.

To repeat a modeling article cliché: "the cradle is a little model all by itself." It really

is. It's composed of seven parts and is complete with a spindle for the cable. You must add the cable, as well as the loop for the rockets. I used some fine wire and lead foil. I decided to leave off the crane until I was ready for final assembly.

I used A+B epoxy for the zimmerit. I prefer this over the other methods. The Squadron-type putties dry too fast for me and I'm a little nervous about the hot knife method, after all the model costs fifty bucks. The A+B provides lots of set-up time, so if you don't like the result, you can just scrape the area clean.

What I do is make a small T-square out of plastic strip to use as guide. I scoot it along the hull as I go. I also made (a while back) a small tool for imprinting the pattern. I just





*Above: the complete interior, ready to be buttoned up. All the major bits are present, but you can add more to the forward end of the compartment.  
At left: the four shells provided. Three are not armed and they were only armed immediately prior to being fired. Tamiya provides the markings on the shells. They read: "Achtung! Feuchligkeitsempfindlich. Ver Regen und Wasser zer schützen," which means: "Warning! Sensitive to damp. Protect from rain and water." Tamiya also offers additional shells made from turned aluminum.*



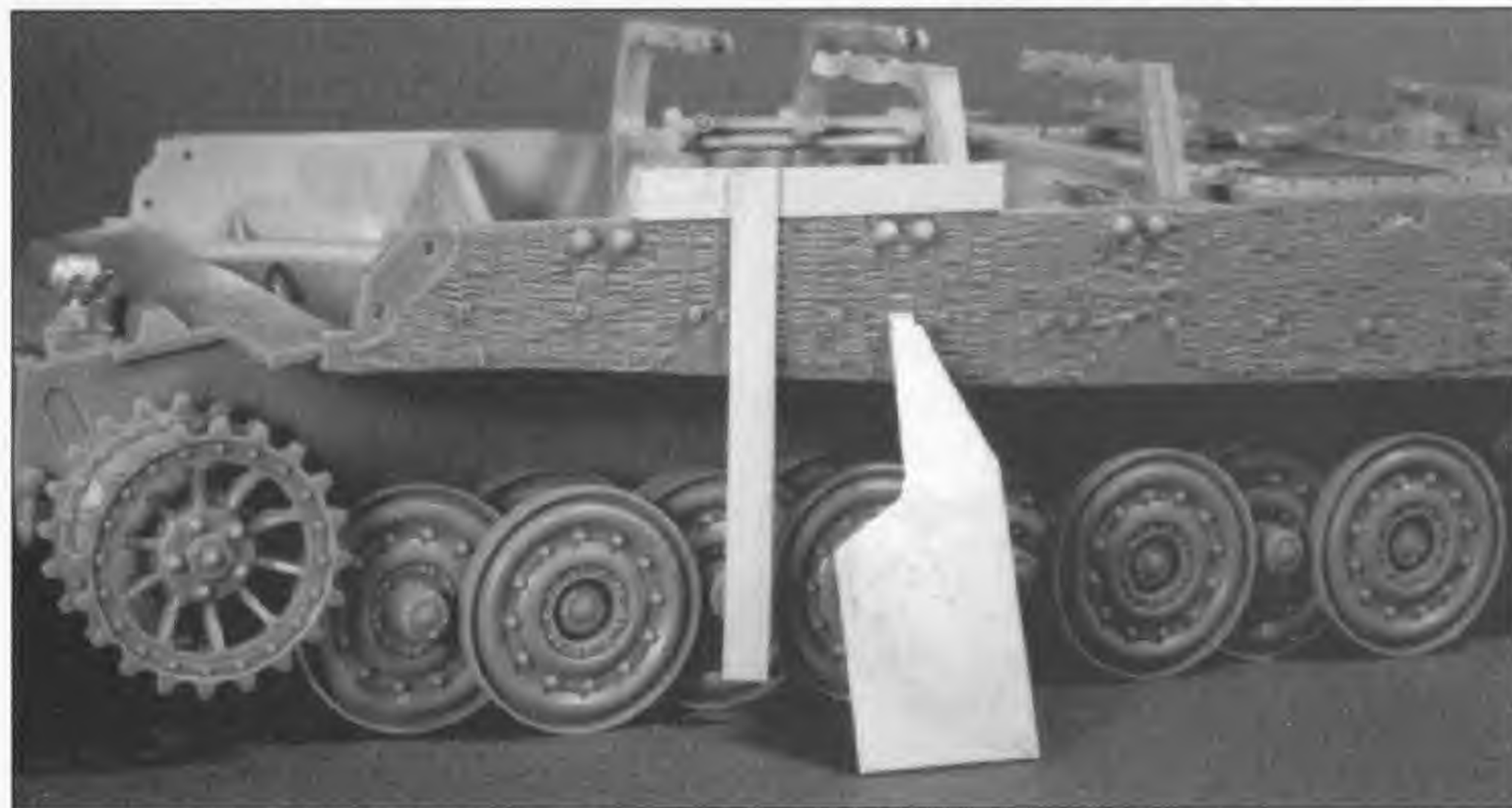
cut it out sheet plastic. The tip is beveled slightly for a fine imprint.

I start by mixing the putty and spreading a relatively even coat on the model with my fingers. Then I begin smoothing it out with small trowel (the kind used for mixing oil paints) and a little water. When I was satisfied that I had a nice uniform thickness, I mounted my T-square and impressed the pattern down its length. I put some water on the back of the square to keep it from sticking.

I work on only one surface at a time, so it took four days to do all the sides of the hull. On the back, I kept all the various fittings

handy to press into the still wet putty. I traced the impressions with a wet blade and removed the excess. The trickiest part was on the hull sides where you must work around the lugs and fender bolts. If I did another S.T., I'd shave these off before applying the zimmerit and then re-install them afterwards. I also checked the fit of the upper hull from time to time to make sure none of the zimmerit was blocking its proper fit.

The coolest part about this method is that when the surfaces are dry, you can slip a sharp knife under the zimmerit and pop off chunks in certain places. This creates that characteristic chipped effect seen on so



*This shot shows the rig for applying the zimmerit coating. The homemade T-square rides along the edge and the tool follows the straight edge. This works on the turret too.*

many late war German tanks.

Since I did want that beat-up, bare look, I left off the fenders. This also showed off those molded-on bolts. I opted to leave the front and rear fenders off as well. The rear fenders needed some detail where the fenders went. I added frames from an old set of On The Mark Models Tiger I brass. This set was pretty extensive and I used only a small number of the parts for an earlier project. The frames really dressed up the rear plates.

I also left off the tools. Some of my references showed no tools or brackets installed, while others showed no trace of them on the hull sides. Perhaps on some vehicles, they were never relocated to the hull sides.

### The Finish Line

Once the zimmerit had dried completely, I buttoned up the hulls and gave the model two or three solid coats of Polly-S mud. This is a dark yellow that I think matches a worn, weathered scheme well.

I lightly dusted the tracks with a grayish brown, but I let the color of the plastic show. The dusting gives them a dull, flat look. The tracks were then installed on the model.

I decided to try something new for my camo scheme—pastels. The effect is very subtle and there is none of the obvious overspray seen with even the finest airbrushes. Well after pondering the technique for a year or so, here's what I came up with.

First I mix the colors. Yup. You can mix them. I shave off various shades of green black and brown to get the desired shade (I use the brand: ALPHACOLORS) and mix them with a dry paintbrush on a shallow plate. I then apply the mixture to the model with a smaller brush, working out from the center of the pattern to the edges. An even smaller brush helps define the edges. I also keep a large, flat brush handy to move the excess color off the other parts of the model. There is a considerable amount of blowing required, so try not to hyper ventilate.

The end result is something that looks good, but probably not vivid enough for most modelers. Here's the trick. Any first year art student will tell you that you have to stabilize all those purty pastel pictures. One good thumbprint and there goes your work of art. So, once I was satisfied with my scheme, I gave the entire model an overcoat of flat finish. As the colors absorb the flat paint, they begin to darken up perfectly. This also seals them. You can go back and add color afterwards and then flat coat again as



many times as you wish. On large schemes you can also add more color on top of the final paint for additional effect. Experiment!

After the last flat coat had dried for 4 or 5 days, I gave the entire model a thin wash of burnt sienna oil paint. I went especially heavy on this around the running gear. When everything was dry, I drybrushed all over. The casting detail on the hull and gun is one area to linger on with the brush.

OK that's it. That's the Sturmiger. Quite a kit. Do I really need recommend it? I think the photos pretty much speak for themselves. Most German armor fans will just have to have this one in their collections. Almost anything German is a winner on the market and Tamiya has done a first class job on this one. I can't wait to see them outdo themselves.

Anything negative at all? Well, the price is pretty steep. Fifty big beans. Is it too high? Consider that you do get an interior and the link-to-link tracks. In some ways it's a value when compared to other recent Tamiya releases that do not include those same useful items.

So get yourself a copy of The Terminator and the Sturminator and have ball! ☺

—Pat Stansell



*It's not mentioned in the text, but those are the Tamiya engine grates. These are available as an accessory set and we nabbed them only at the last minute. Looks neat, doesn't it?*

## MMIR RECCE

**Tamiya Sturmiger.** Kit number 35177. Sample provided by Tamiya of America. Retail price is \$50.00, available wherever Tamiya kits are sold.

### References

*Tiger and Sturmiger in Detail* by Bruce Culver and Uwe Feist. Ryton Publications. About the only book ever done on the Sturmiger, this one has tons of great interior and exterior photos of the tank. A complete description can be found in the Short Takes Section of this volume. The cost of the book is \$40.00 and it can be found at your favorite hobbyshop, bookseller or directly from Ryton: P.O. Box 2306, Bellingham, WA 98227. Enclose an additional \$3.50 for postage.

*AFV News, October 1976, Volume 11, Number 5.* AFV Association.

This one might be tough to find, but it does have many of the photos from the Chamberlain collection, which contains the bulk of the German wartime training shots. The pictures in this volume are small, but are very interesting.



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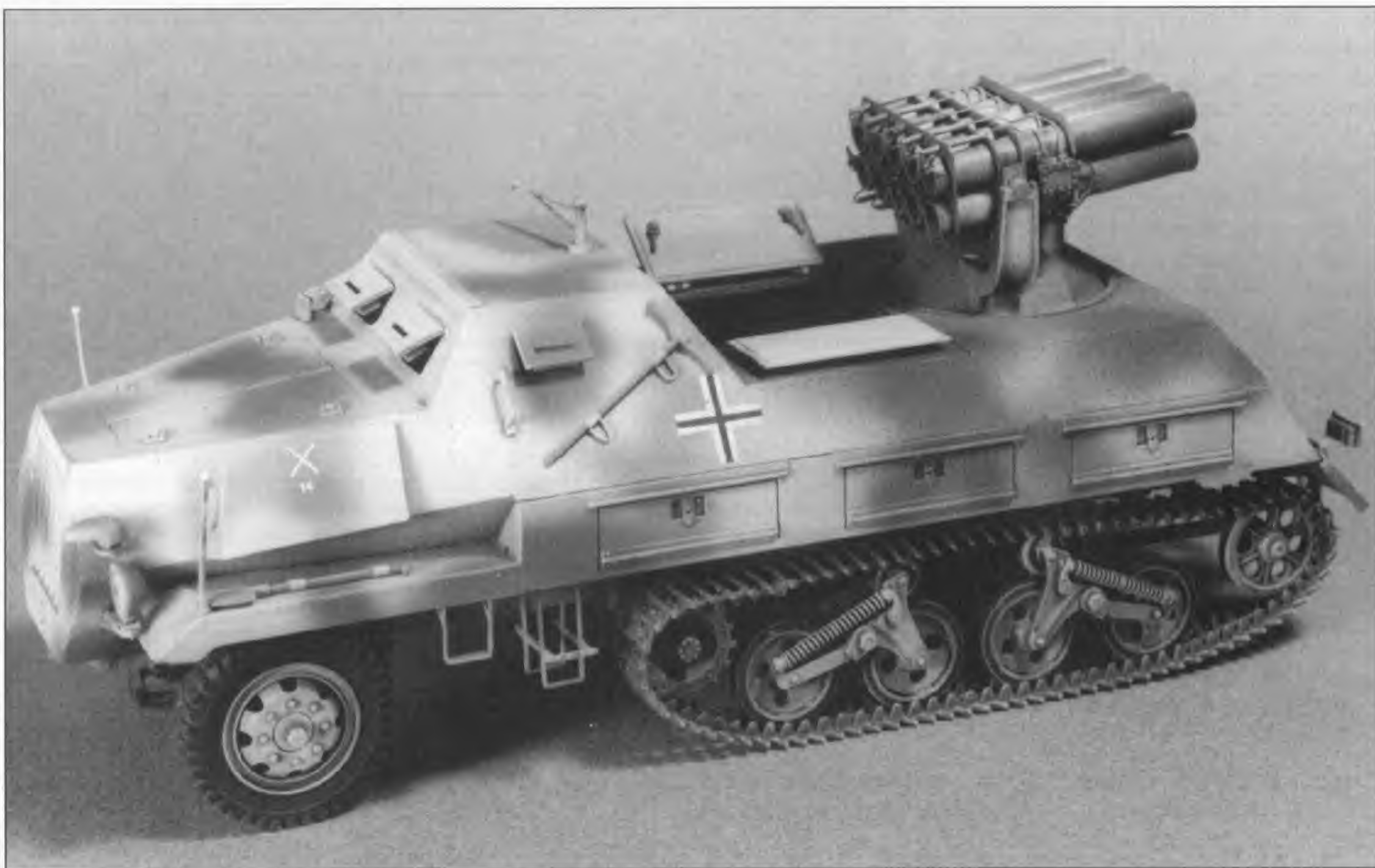
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# Please Pass the Panzerwerfer

We review and soup-up the Italeri kit



**E**arly this past summer, a friend brought me back a new Italeri Panzerwerfer 42 auf Maultier kit from Germany. I dug hungrily into the box and found a very nice kit. The only thing that really held me back from immediate construction was its most noticeable feature, the rocket launchers. But take heart, dear reader, we're building this sucker.

The kit suffers the unfortunate consequences of the limits of injection molding. There are just some pieces that are too complex or intricate to be injection molded well. The 15cm mortar consists of basically two rows of five tubes held in place by four thin baffles. Italeri represents these

pieces in four parts: top row (upper and lower) and bottom row (upper and lower). They look all right and are molded well, but they just look like plastic. Another problem arises when one considers that each tube gets its own ignition wire. These wires are also molded on and look like plastic walls between the tubes. There's got to be a better solution!

A solution presented itself in the form of the French resin company ADV/Azimut. A few years back, Azimut did their own kit of the Pz.WF. 42 in resin. But they created a rocket assembly using turned brass barrels and etched brass baffles and locking pins. Azimut in their magnificence also offers this rocket launcher assembly as a separate item.

Again, on the downside, the launcher assembly can be hard to find in the U.S., however writing Azimut directly will make matters much simpler.

## Anyway, on to the Werfer...

Construction began with all the shiny brass. The barrels were lined up between their photoetched baffles and glued into place. Getting even spacing was easy, as guide lines were scribed into each barrel (pour le bete Americain). Very thin superglue worked well and hid itself in the cracks where baffle met barrel. Once dry, the resin (resine) junction boxes were added. Each wiring lead was drilled out with a micro bit to expedite wiring. Some thin copper wire from an old electric motor was



used and was run from each junction box to the back of each tube. Care must be taken to run the right wire to the right tube. Panzers in Saumur #2 proved an invaluable source for reference photos here!

The aft wire sections were insulated on the real vehicle and were easily simulated with very, very thin brass tube threaded onto the wire and through the rear baffle (trust me, it's not that hard). Finally, each wire was bent into its respective tube. Next came etched brass locking pins. These are two piece assemblies and are angled at 2 o'clock and 10 o'clock on the upper and lower rows of tubes.

The entire brass assembly was grafted onto Italeri's turret support arms (93a/94a). The fit between the two kits was good. The rest of the turret was finished as per Italeri instructions.

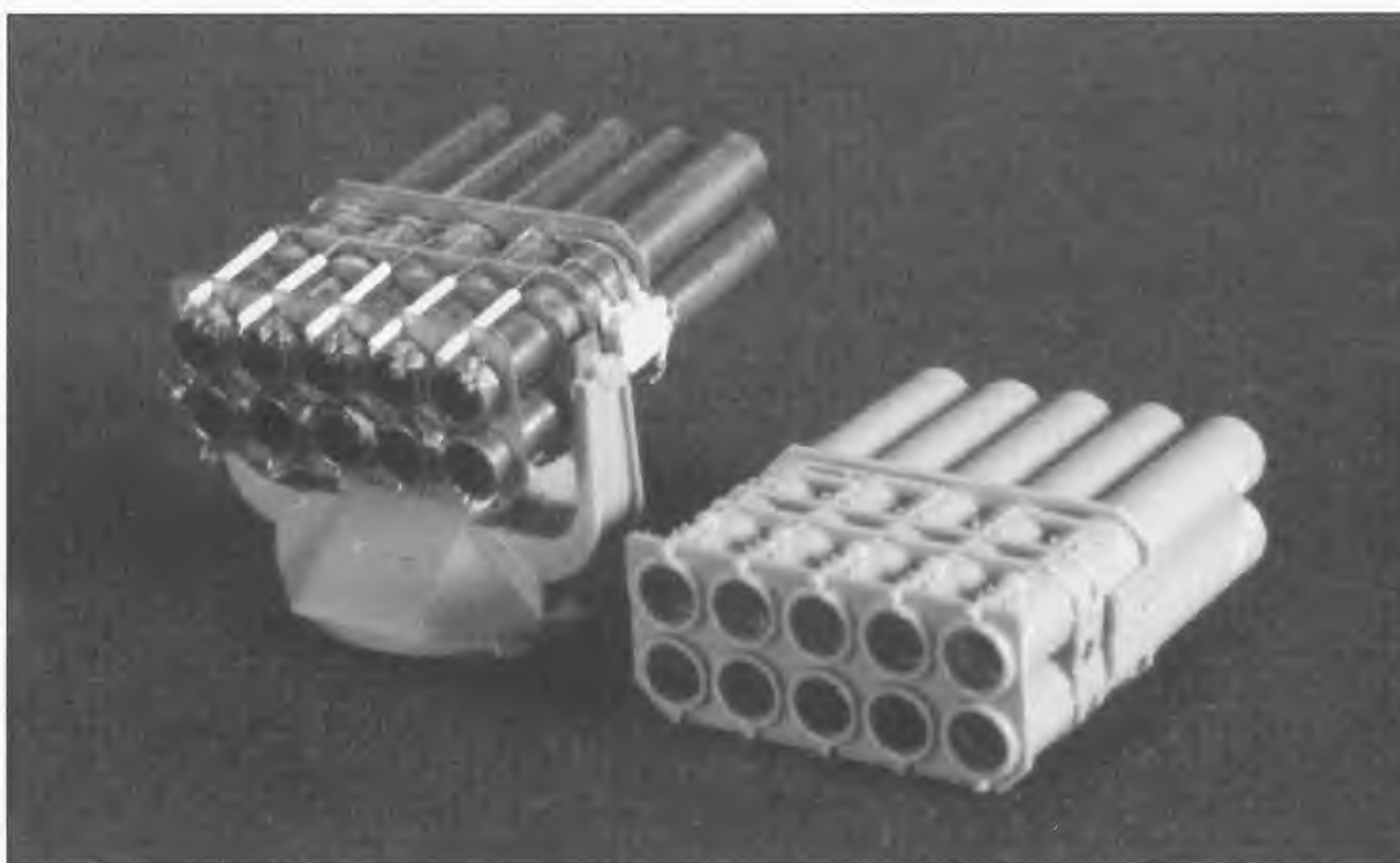
### Le Interior

Next came the interior. Italeri provides the modeler with just about all that could be seen through the hatches, however, there is lots of room to superdetail.

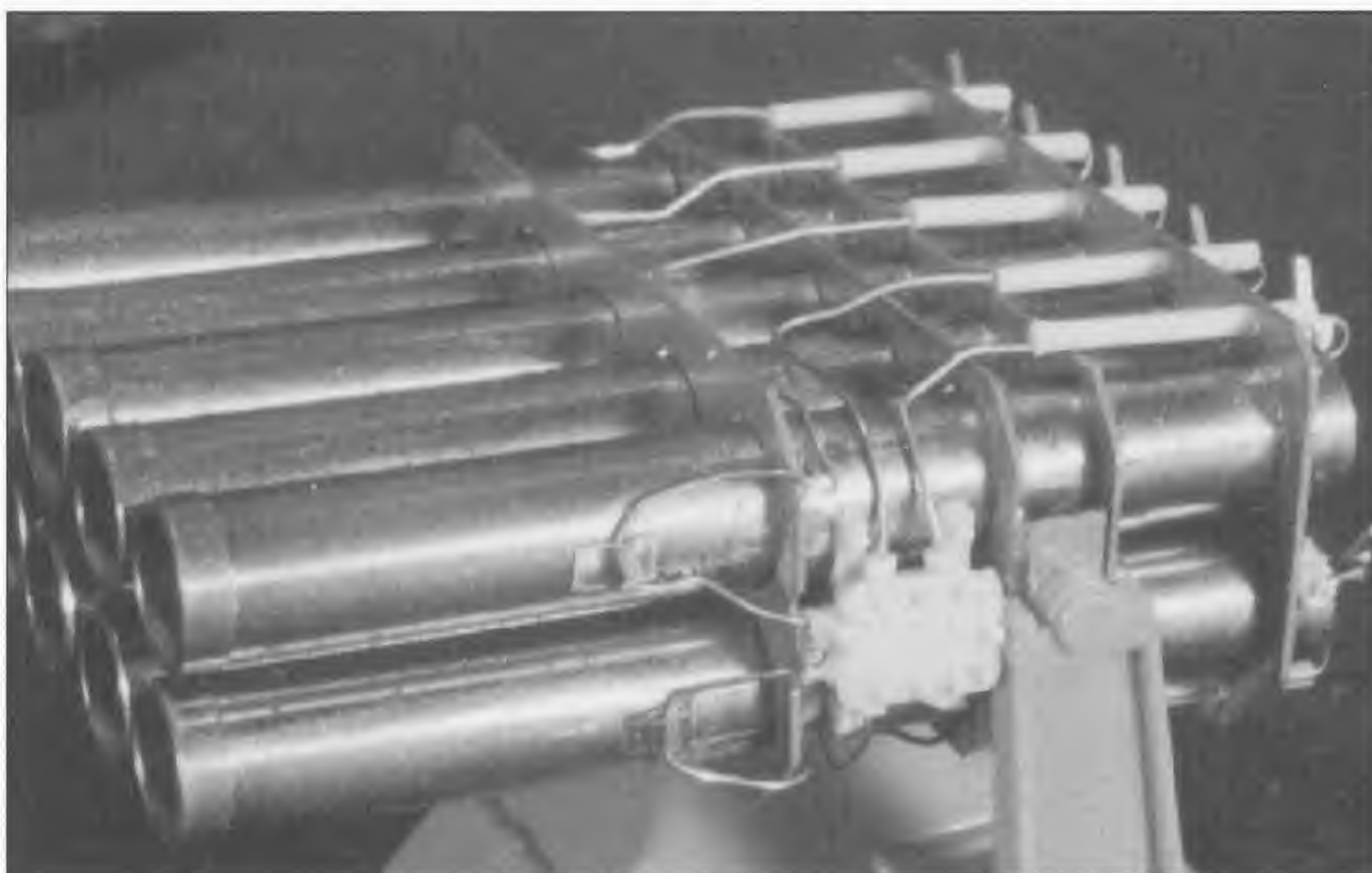
I had intended at open both the rear doors and upper hatches but my kit's rear floor has a real sink mark problem. The floor comes molded with heavy treadplate on it (as it should be) but the treadplate is marred with large indented lines coming from frames support beams molded to the part's underside. These sink marks could not be seen from the upper hatches, so feeling really geeky, I hinged them so the could open and close (hinging is another story for another time)(as is my love affair with parentheses).

The interior consisted of seats, dashboard, throttle, steering wheel and rocket stowage racks. I added visor frames from a Tamiya Sdkfz 250 to the inner upper hull. On the seats, I added back support springs from wound wire. The seat backs were about the only driver's compartment feature that could be seen well though the top.

The floor got painted flat black and the walls and ceiling light gray. Once dry, the floor's treadplate was drybrushed with steel. Rocket racks, part 45a were given a coat of black and subsequently added to the hull sides. Space plates 44a were coated with brown. Rockets got a coat of dark gray and their container tubes were sprayed field gray. These were loaded onto the racks with stowed rounds on the right and ready rounds on the left. Retaining bands for the racks were fashioned from Plastruct C-beam. At this time, the hull was washed, drybrushed and glued together.



*Above: the finished brass replacement launcher on the left and the Italeri stock part on the right.*



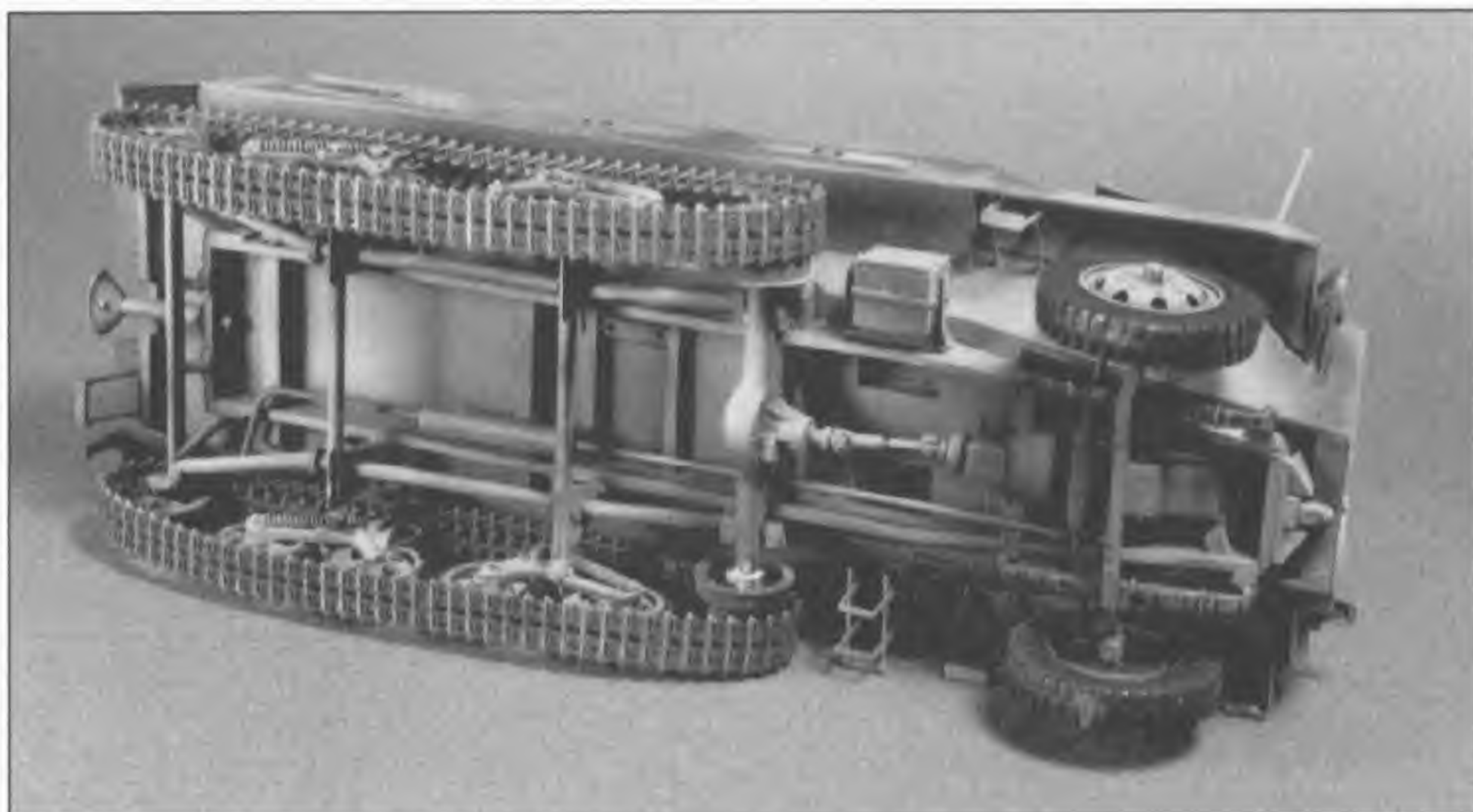
*Two overall shots of the finished launcher assembly. Many of the small fittings and wires are evident in the photos. Note the very nice machined detail on the ends of the rocket tubes.*



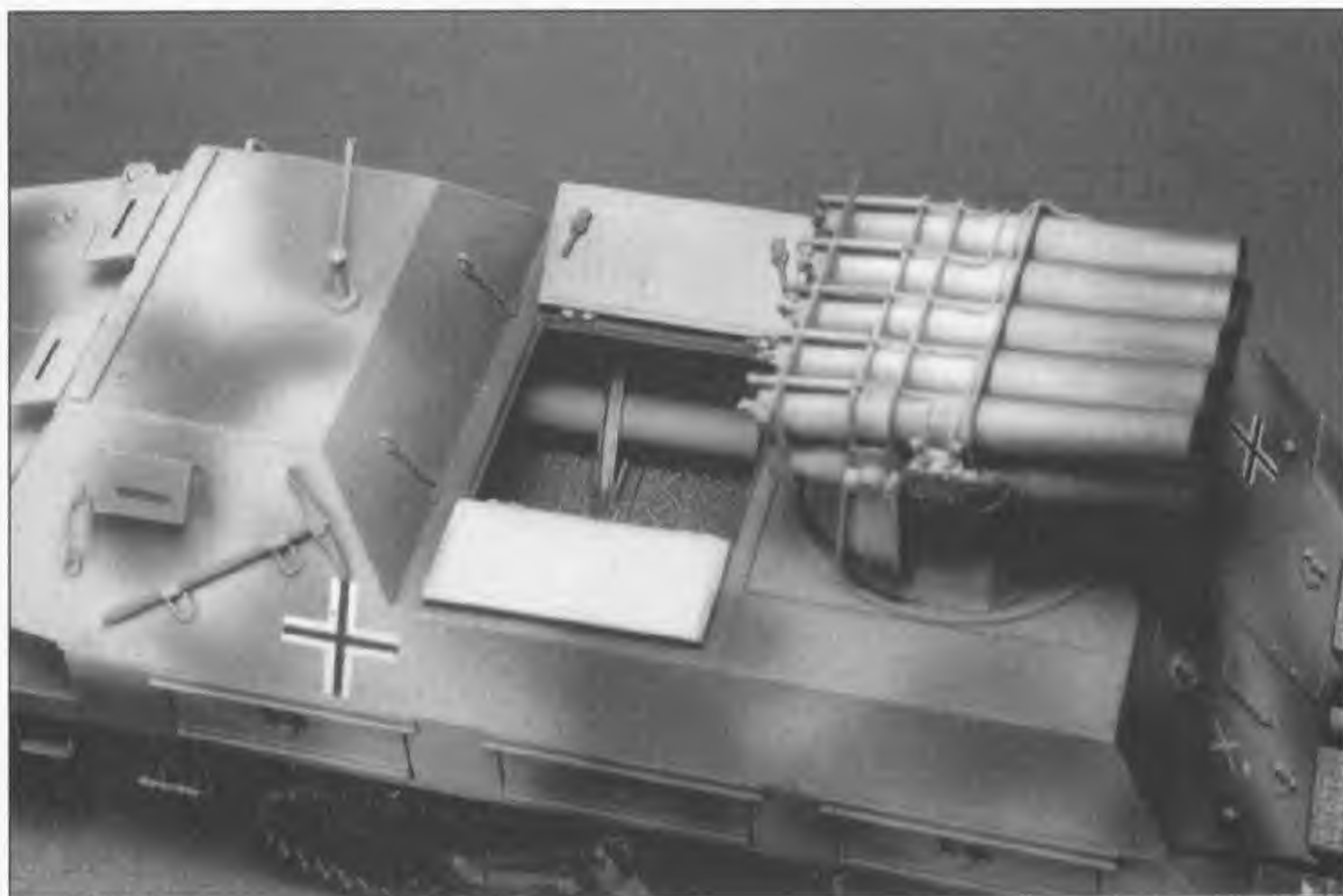




*Above: the wire springs added to the rear of each front seat. Right: the replacement wheels which represent the correct hub pattern. Similar wheels are available from ADV/Azimut and Chesapeake Model Designs.*



*Above: the bottom of the finished model. Top right and below: two views of the finished and painted launcher. The rockets gave off a fair amount of smoke and flame, so the tubes would show considerable soot. Below: the view into the loading compartment. The doors were hinged with wire so that they could be opened and closed. Just visible is one of the rocket tubes provided in the kit. The small hooks on the back of the driver's compartment were used to keep the doors from falling completely open, therefore providing some protection while loading the tubes. Bottom right: the scratchbuilt jerrycan holder.*





### On to the suspension.

The underside of the kit is essentially the same as Italeri's Opel Maultier cargo vehicle. The parts were delicate and nicely molded. For some reason, Italeri decided to use some strange 6-hole bogie wheels instead of the ones with four holes. Miracle of miracles, one of my good modelin' buddies is "lathe afflicted." He came up with some 4 hole replacement wheels and cast a few copies. These wheels fit right on the bogie and gave the model it's characteristic look. If you don't have a similarly afflicted pal, ADV/Azimut and Chesapeake Models (in the U.S.) both make replacement sets.

Care had to be taken when working with the bogies as they mount to thin supports that lend themselves to damage. I wasn't careful enough when installing the tracks and I snapped off a bogie. I took a momentary cursing break and reattached it.

The sides presented potential problems as another set of sink marks ran down them. Fortunately they were hidden by the stowage bins. Another small dent runs down the line of rivets above the bins, but it looks sort of like stressed metal. Rather than subsidizing Grandt Line for 6 months, I decided to live with the dent.

Most of Italeri's hull fittings were used as they were. The headlights and blackout lights were good and their support arms were nice and thin. I cut the retainer clips off the shovel and pick and replaced them with brass ones. Otherwise the tools are good too.

Italeri provides two racks for holding jerrycans on either side of the vehicle. On the Saumur vehicle there are battery boxes in these locations. I scratchbuilt a battery box and installed it on the right side, leaving the left side for the can rack. The rack looked too thick in plastic so I made one from scrap brass, along with some boarding steps. The final fix was on the vision blocks. Italeri's are just plain do-do. They are lined with sink marks and the vision slit is in the wrong place (in the center vs. below it). I made new ones from strip plastic and put some vision blocks on their backsides.

### PainterWerfer

The model was airbrushed with Tamiya dark yellow and splotted on red brown and dark green. The whole model was overcoated with guess what... black gauche in Future Floor Wax. Yeah, I always use it, but it works. The kit decals went on with no problem and reacted well to Solvaset.

After decaling, the 'Werfer was drybrushed with dark yellow overall.

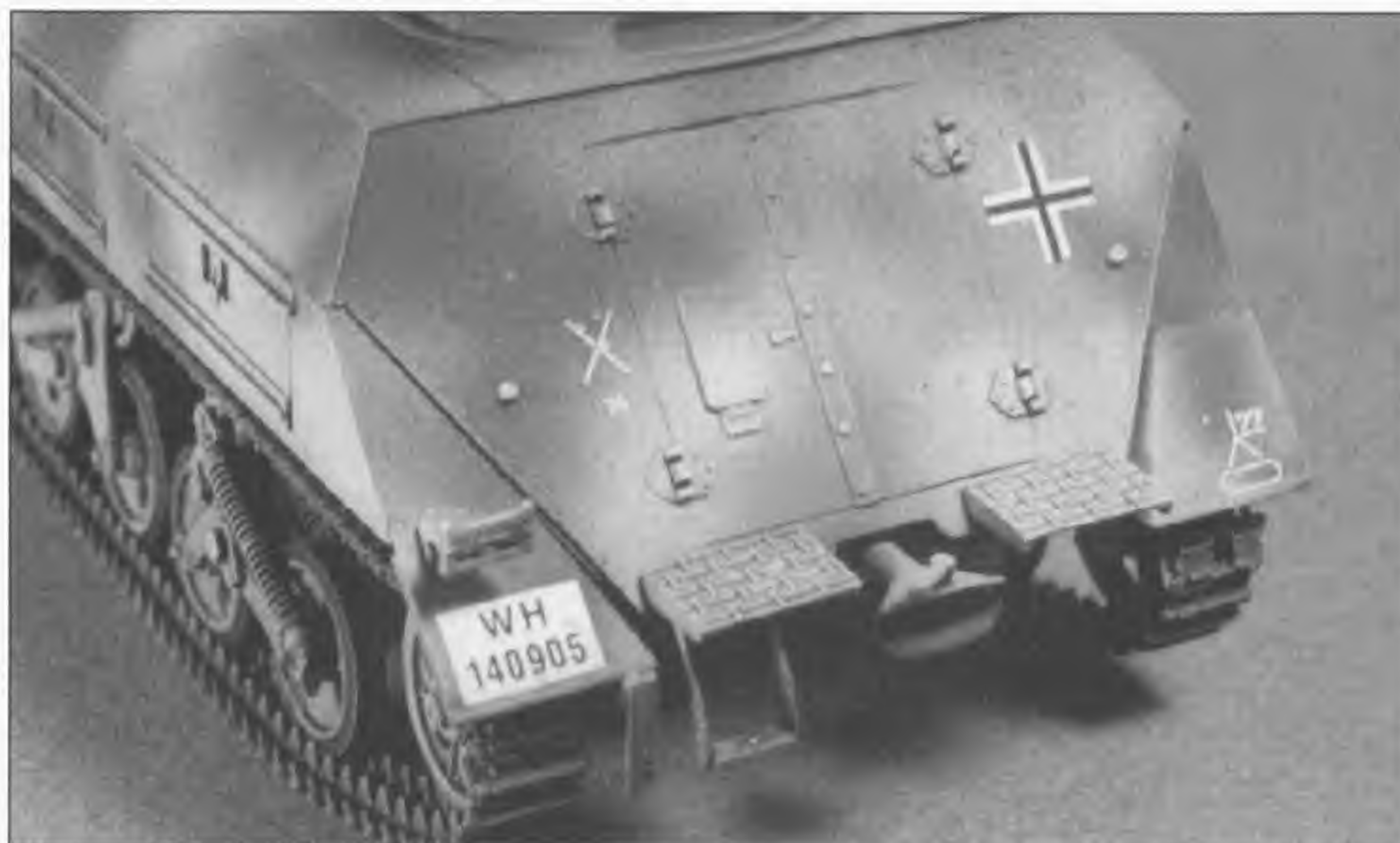
Afterward lighter shades were drybrushed over lighter spots to highlight the highlights.

Finally an overspray of black was shot all over the rear deck. Rocket exhaust made the Pz.WF, 42's rear deck filthy with soot.

Italeri's Panzerwerfer is an overall good

kit. Aside from plastic looking rocket launchers, wrong bogey wheels and annoying sink marks, building it was actually enjoyable. Azimut's rocket launcher set brings the kit to life. ☺

—Eric Knight



## MMiR RECCE

**Italeri PanzerWerfer 42.** Available wherever Italeri kits are sold. Retail price \$17.50.

**ADV/Azimut Panzerwerfer Detail Set** Kit number 35130. Purchased from the manufacturer; Azimut Productions 8 rue Baulant, 75012, Paris, France. Tel. 1 43.07.06.16. Fax 1 43.47.11.93. Warning: they speak very little English but do take VISA and MC. A fax might be your best bet. These products are also becoming more widely available in the U.S. Check with you local hobby source. If they don't have the line, tell them to contact The Right Stuff Distributors in California.

### References

*Panzers in Saumur, No. 2* Art Box Co, Ltd. Very good coverage of the werfer preserved at the Musée des Blindés in Saumur, France. Scores of interior and exterior shots, plans and sketches. Every few years, they run this out the door and chase people around with it. Usually on Bastille Day (July 21). Check for Panzers in Saumur at your local hobby shop or RZM Imports.



# Artillery with an Attitude

The MB Models  
Soviet 203mm  
Howitzer



I wouldn't say I'm a big fan of artillery models. However, when I first heard about the 203mm howitzer it appealed to me right away. First and foremost it's got tracks—and that's a definite plus in my book.

This field piece was also sort of the “Baddest Kid” on the block carrying around a hefty twenty-plus centimeters of barrel. It was designed in the early thirties for the then, still young Soviet Army. It was no doubt inspired by the post WWI trend of bigger and bigger artillery. It was probably the right idea until they realized they could fly the rounds in with wacky things called “planes.”

At any rate, this big fellow was used extensively by the Soviets during WWII and even saw service with the Germans, who captured one or two and then had the gaul (pun intended) to use them against the Allies in France.

It comes as no surprise that this subject has been ignored in plastic, after all, it is pretty obscure. However, this has never stopped the resin companies and now we have this little beauty from the folks at MB Models.

The kit is composed of some fairly substantial size resin hunks, white metal parts, and a big ol' sheet of photo etched brass. There are also two sprues of number 154 Grandt Line rivets and a some brass rod.

## Pour Me Another

The model is broken into several large subassemblies, the gun and cradle, the carriage, and the two tracked sponsons. The first thing I noticed was some very impressive detailing throughout the model. There's enough rivets molded on this thing to drive the most experienced scratchbuilder nuts. The casting of all these parts was impressive as well.

I was a bit intimidated by what are some of the largest overpours I've ever seen on many of the larger parts. The gun carriage is a one-piece casting and the pour spout runs the length of the piece. The overpour on the gun mount is also a big one.

You have two choices here in my estimation. Number one is the flanking attack. Carefully saw and then sand all the parts until the spouts are paper thin, then scrape them away with a knife. Number two is to carefully grind away the overpour with a Dremel tool. Incidentally, this is what the instructions recommend.

Since I was in somewhat of a hurry (our editor is a task master), I went this route. I also have some experience with this method and I really do prefer it. Overpours, sometimes substantial ones, are a fact of resin kit life. And since I like the unusual subjects these manufacturers supply, I



learned to live with them a while ago.

My secret, if you can call it that, is a good selection of Dremel tool bits. I have four that I like best. The first is a large steel-cutting bit. I use this only for large areas where control is not a problem. This big one can get away from you. Result: disaster. The second is a smaller oval bit, about an eighth of an inch long. This is my general purpose bit and I use it for almost all grinding. The two remaining bits both have very small heads and are used for only the smallest detail work. These smaller bits are also difficult to control, so they should be used carefully. All were purchased at hobby shops and all were under four dollars each.

### They Grind, We Grind

I started with the gun carriage, working carefully over the surface with my "football" bit. Thankfully, the pour does not extend flush with the side of the carriage. It stops about a 32nd on an inch from the edge. If you concentrate on the middle of the pours, you'll only have a small amount of material to remove at the outside with a knife. If you go too close on the bottom, it's not really noticeable. You also have to be especially careful around the front of the carriage, where two lugs emanate from the front edge. Don't get too close with the bit.

By far the trickiest part was the pour on the gun mount. The front edge has a brace which protrudes downward across the front



*Left: the gun assembly turned upside down, showing the small brass bracket. Right: again, the gun upside down, this time showing that very sweet looking gun elevation wheel.*



preferred to have seen many of these parts cast in white metal, rather than resin. This would have eliminated the need for a pour spout altogether. I finished all the finer work with files and wet sanding. With the use of the Dremel, all of the clean-up took just under two hours.

One more note about this: the instructions suggest wearing goggles and a mask when grinding resin. I can't stress this enough. Resin dust is very bad news. A mask or a respirator along with safety glasses is a must. Keeping a shop vac handy will get rid of the dust before it can be carried to another part of the house. This also helps preserve domestic harmony.

### They Build, We Build

I started by building the gun barrel assembly, which is pretty elaborate. This is where the instructions start and I generally followed the order suggested. I used superglue throughout construction. I like two types, one slightly thinner, the other thicker.

At first I didn't get the sequence here, but after studying the photos it sort of dawned on me. Three recuperator cylinders are provided and one must be shortened to fit. The

instructions state that 3/64" should be removed. I found that to be too much. Cut it carefully and test fit as you cut.

There are several resin pieces that must be rounded to fit against the barrel. These all fit together with the cylinders. Keep an eye on these, you'll need to test fit as you go.

The last pieces added were the breech

lever, two small brackets on either side of the barrel and the elevation gear on the bottom of the gun. The rendering of this particular piece was a little spooky. I had to keep reminding myself that this is a cottage industry kit. This part and many of the others are rendered exquisitely. They are machined to a very high degree of accuracy.

I never figured out what those two brass brackets were for. Two similar ones install on the gun mount. There is a long strap labeled PE18 that isn't mentioned in the instructions. I believe all this is some sort of travel lock for the gun.

### Sponsons, Sponsons, Sponsons

The track sponsons are each one piece. There's some very fine flash on each of the large pieces. The pour spout is on the top of the sponson and you must remove it to reveal the holes for the bogie wheel mounts. Once this is done, each mount slides through and then the wheels mount onto a metal T-bar. Make sure these are all straight and true. I didn't and it caused me problems later with the tracks. You also must carefully open the hole on either side of each sponson. These holes engage the axle. I marked the sponsons right and left to make sure that when I installed them, the sprocket would face the right direction (that's to the rear).

The drive sprockets (all the running gear parts are white metal) are very cleverly designed to incorporate two photo-etched pieces to engage the tracks. One of these pieces fits over each side of the sprocket. The brass parts were a tight fit on one side, but with a little filing they fit down snug.

The sprockets each get about ten million little photo-etched teeth. This is a very neat feature, but man, is it tedious. I guess I could have left some out, because they can't all be seen. But I would just know they weren't there and I would inevitably wake up screaming one night: I-LEFT-OFF-THE-



*The selection of Dremel bits used. The two at the far left are for fine detail work, while the two at left do the heavier work. The one at the far right is the football bit mentioned in the text.*

of the pour. Avoiding this area carefully, I went close to it but not too close. The remaining resin was removed with a file. More on this later.

While I had the bits out, I went after the smaller parts as well. The Dremel made short work of these. Taking those off by hand would have been tough. I think I would have





*The drive sprocket showing its (photo-etched) teeth.*

TEETH, I-LEFT-O F F - T H E - T E E T H ... Anyway, I did install every one. I found that many of the teeth stuck up slightly, so to ensure a good fit with the tracks,

I knocked them down with a file. This was worth the effort, as the closer the tracks sit down on the sprockets, the better it looks.

As I mentioned at the top, the tracks are white metal link to link. Metal links are a challenge. I first ran into them with MB's JSII kit and they weren't quite as bad as I'd first thought they'd be. If I had a choice here I'd pick plastic. I've always found plastic links easiest to work with. Well, I don't think we'll see Model Kasten links for the 203 any time soon. I generally detest resin tracks. This is just my personal opinion, but I've never been satisfied with the finished look of resin tracks. I can never seem to get the joint right and the huge amounts of flash can drive even the most patient modeler up the wall. So that brings us back to metal.

The metal option was not without its problems. Each link needed a little attention—a burr here, a bit of flash there. There are extras provided, so the real rough ones went right into the garbage. It took about forty-minutes to get them all cleaned up.

To install the tracks, I made a strip for the bottom run and then worked them up and over the sprocket and back to the idler wheel. The idler is designed to slide back and forth to ensure the proper fit of the tracks. As you work your way back this gets way tricky. I used slower setting SG to get the links started, then I ran the thinner junk in to freeze the parts. I zapped everything with

accelerator when I was satisfied with the look and droop.

I like to keep small tufts of paper towel handy to wick away excess glue before applying the accelerator. If this excess glue hardens, it can be a bear to remove.

The trickiest part of installing the tracks is going around the sliding idler wheel. Making sure it all fits right and gluing it at the right time takes a few extra fingers and toes.

When all was dry, I checked the lengths of each track to make sure they were all even on the edges. A hit with file made them look sharp. The finished sprockets build into nice little models all by themselves.

### C-C-C-Carriage

After removing the pour spout, there's not a whole lot of work left. The rivet detail is stunning and is found everywhere but the very bottom. Several white metal pieces get added, along with the spade assembly. A resin piece fits on the back of the carriage and a photo-etched bracket wraps around each side to integrate it into the carriage. Here's where those extra Grandt Line rivets come in. Their placement is indicated by pips etched into the brackets. I like to remove the rivets one at a time, then pick them up by carefully pressing the point of an X-acto onto the rivet. I then dip them in a small puddle of SG nearby and place them on the model.

It took me a few tries to get the spade assembly correct. Lots of dry fitting helps. The spade can be posed in the firing position.

The front of the carriage gets two photo-etched brackets on each side to receive the resin axle. Be careful how you place them. Their specific location is not marked on the carriage. There are several photos that show them in the instructions and I used those to guide me. I was a little skeptical that the brackets would hold well, but no matter how hard I smacked the model on the table, I just

couldn't get them to fly off (JOKE). I inserted the axle and left it to turn freely. More Grandt Line rivets go on the outside bracket on each side.

### Groovy Gun Mount

The gun mount is beautifully molded as a single piece. It is finely detailed even on the inside. I cleaned up its large overpour with the rest of the parts, but left the fine work until now.

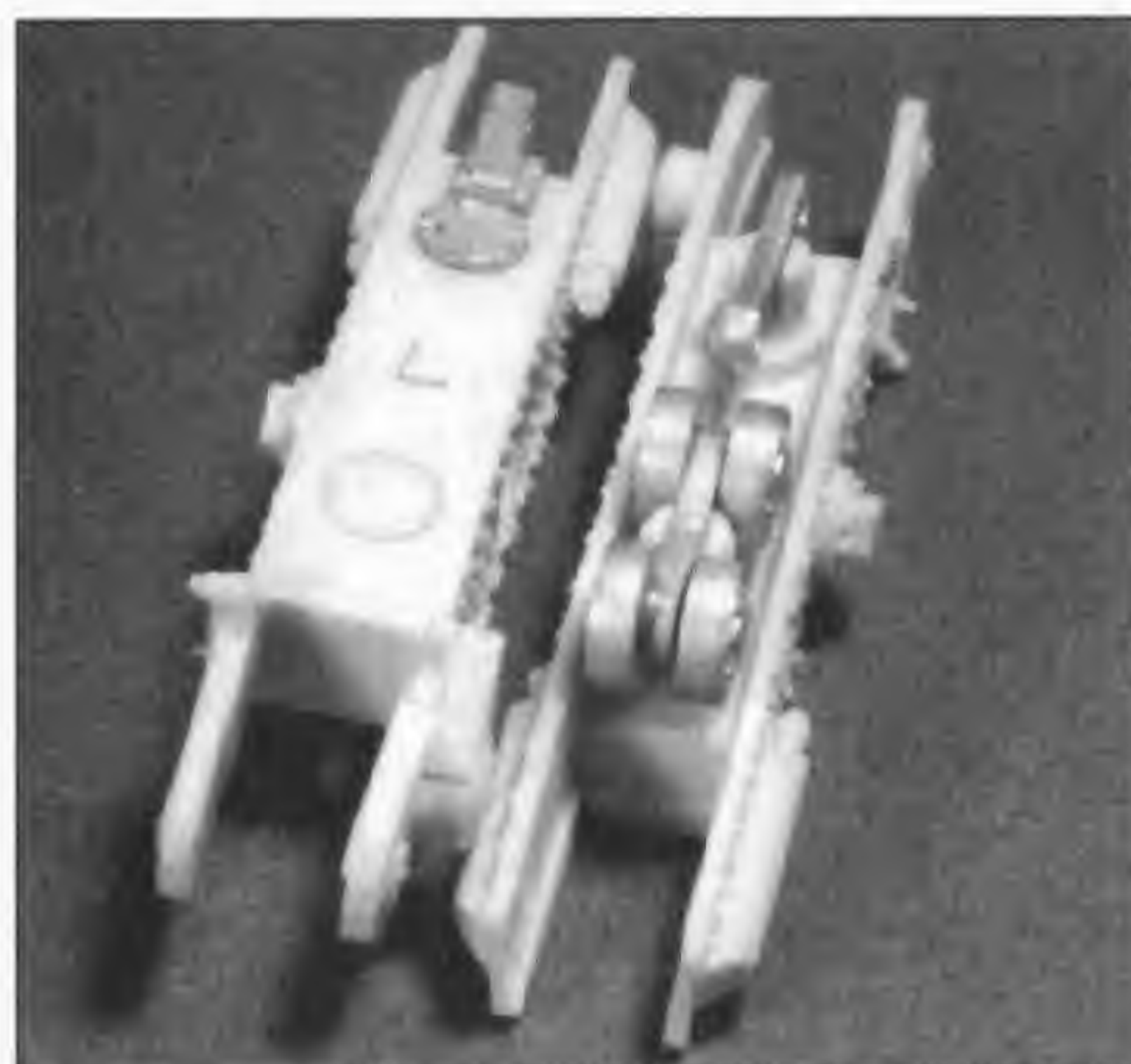
The mount has a very fine flange running all around its bottom edge. You must



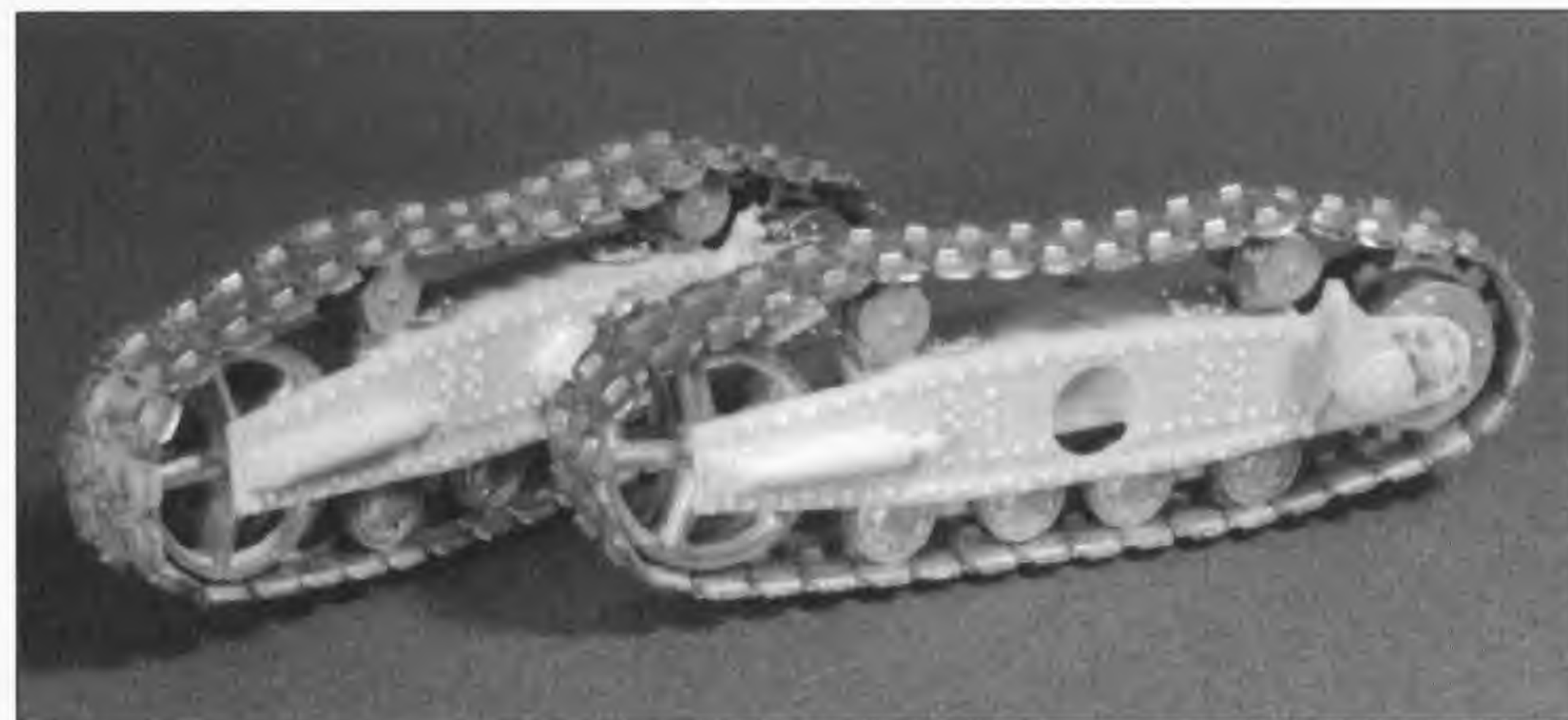
*Above: the photo-etched part that fits around the spade mount. Below: the finished spade.*



be very careful not to damage this as you go. As I mentioned, the toughest part is at the front of the cradle, which has a bracket thingee protruding downward. This prohibits you from just wailing away on a sanding block. I taped a sheet of sandpaper to the edge of my workbench and hung the brackets off the table as I sanded. The remaining cleanup was done with a file and a knife. It's really not as hard as it looks. This all could have



*Two views of the track sprockets. The shot at left shows how the bogies should line up before adding the tracks. The shot at right shows the two finished assemblies. The inside face is the one with the large hole. This engages the axle underneath the gun carriage.*





been avoided if those brackets had been molded separately. Oh well.

The instructions don't mention it, but the mount should not sit completely flush on the carriage. It's only flush at certain points. This is dead-on accurate and spiffy observation by whoever built the master pattern.

Most of the detailing of this model is on the gun mount. This is where all the elevation controls, seats, etc. are located.

Several of the elevation controls require sections of rod to run from one to the other. Brass rod is provided for this. It was a little tough to correctly gauge the lengths of these and you may want to substitute plastic rod. The plastic being easier to fit and cut as you go.

I drilled holes to receive the rods and on part M9 (the elevation doo-hickey) I drilled right through the length of it. This was so I



*The gun mount prior to installation of the main gun. It's even detailed where you can't see it!*

could use a single piece of rod to run from the elevation wallbangy (the main elevation gear, M38) to the elevation wheel. I take my shortcuts where I can get them.

There is some sort of brake release lever on each side of the carriage. I mounted these now. They would have been in the way before. Each is wonderfully detailed and they come complete with teeth to engage the release lever. Hubba-hubba.

A B-A-U tiff-il winch assembly gets installed on the front face of the gun mount. This thing is really nice. Several photo-etched parts make up its base and they fit and fold together magically. A capstan and two brackets finish it off. More rivets are added to detail its mount.

More rod gets installed from two metal pieces on either side of the winch. These pass perfectly through the brackets and meet the winch base. Scary. While working on this

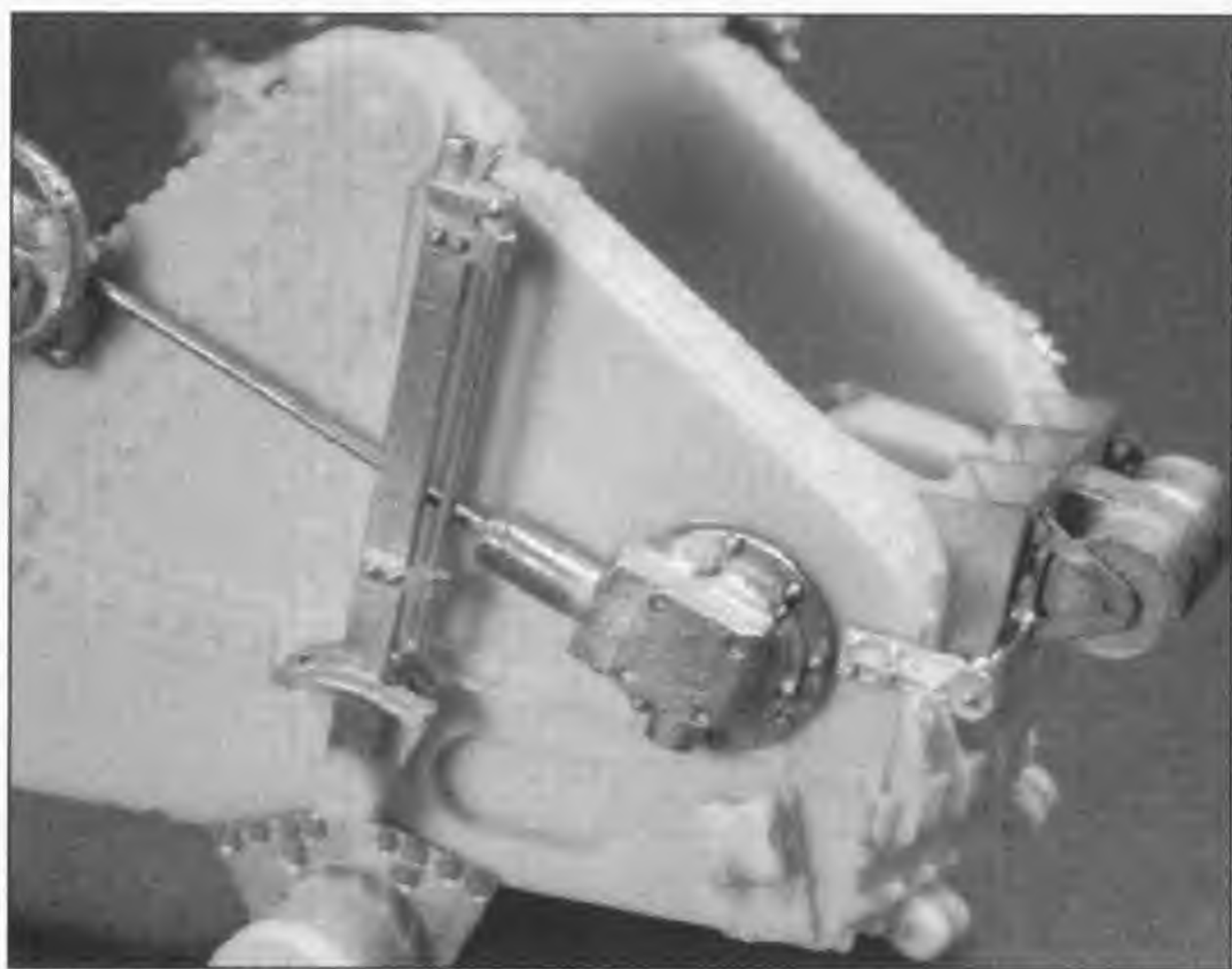
model, I spent two nights working well past midnight ("Honey, are you coming to bed?") primarily due to evil little details like this. It was like a good book you just can't put down.

The most complex part of this model was the footstands. The instructions contain two photos and the understatement of the century: "just study the photos." Very funny. Fortunately, the photos are fairly clear, but a little more explanation would have helped.

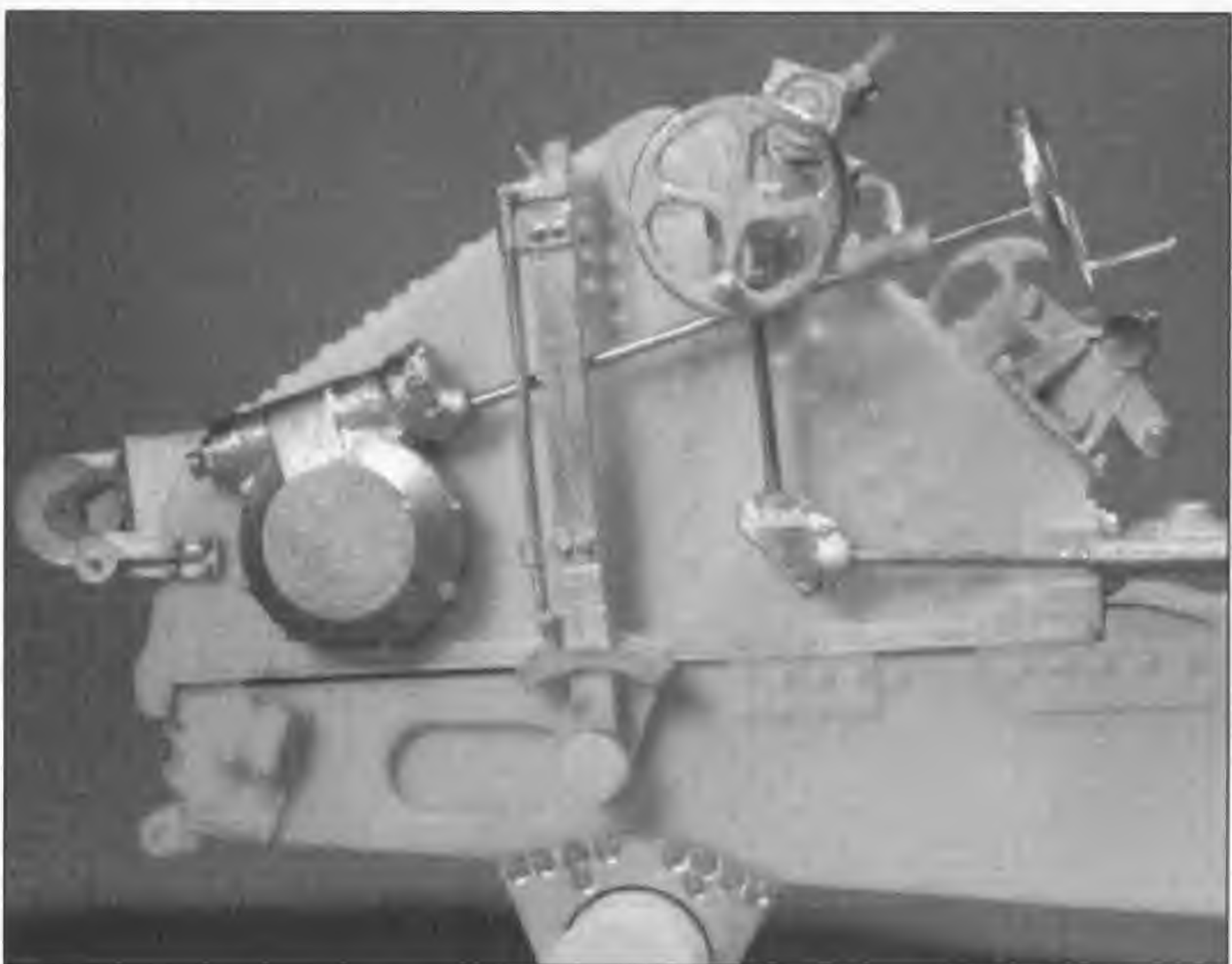
Each stand is made up completely of photo-etched parts and each is a pretty impressive little piece of model engineering. I looked at all the photos in the instruction sheet to get a better idea of what was going on. I'll give you a hint: etched parts 7d and 8d get folded around the back of the seat stand. In all the photos, it looks like three pieces. Make sure you bend these parts away from their etched bend lines. Also, to get the proper angles to fold the stands, I compared them to parts 7e and 8e, which contain the correct angles. In spite of the confusion, everything did fit together very well. Even if it did take a while to figure out where to fit it.

The seat bases are also brass and fold into wacky S-shapes. The left hand one is cut out for the gun controls. Both seats receive braces on their back sides and resin seat cushions. The last of the brass rod provided was used to form the arm rests.

The shell cradle is another piece made up mostly of photo-etched parts. It has three arms which hold a large tray for the rounds. The tray must be bent to the shape of the arms and this more or less makes the cradle. The arms should all be identical (I think) and one is a little longer. I used the others as a reference to trim the longer one down. A white metal bar with a loop in it goes across the top. The whole thing gets set into metal axles with nifty little wheels. Three more



*The right and left hand sides of the gun carriage before the seats and footstands were added. Check out those brake levers.*



etched parts make into what looks like a device for flipping the round off the tray.

I wasn't sure at first what this thing was for, then I figured that the cradle must have been used to combine the two-piece rounds and then the crane (I forgot to mention it, a very nice white metal part) lifted them up to the breech.

## Finishing

At this point, I was pretty much done. I

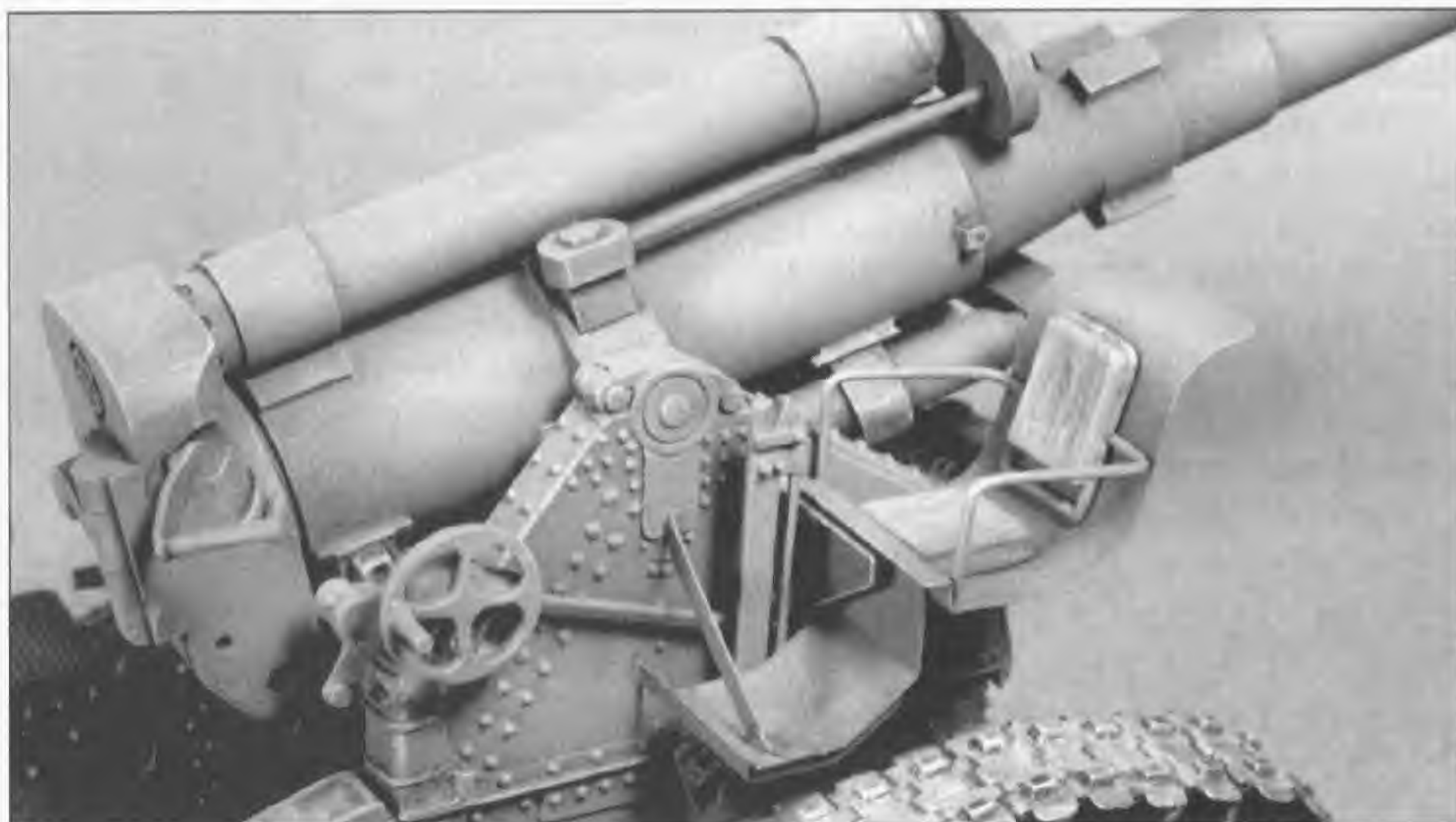


*The basic subassemblies of the winch. Everything fit together almost perfectly.*





*The finished seats and footstands.*



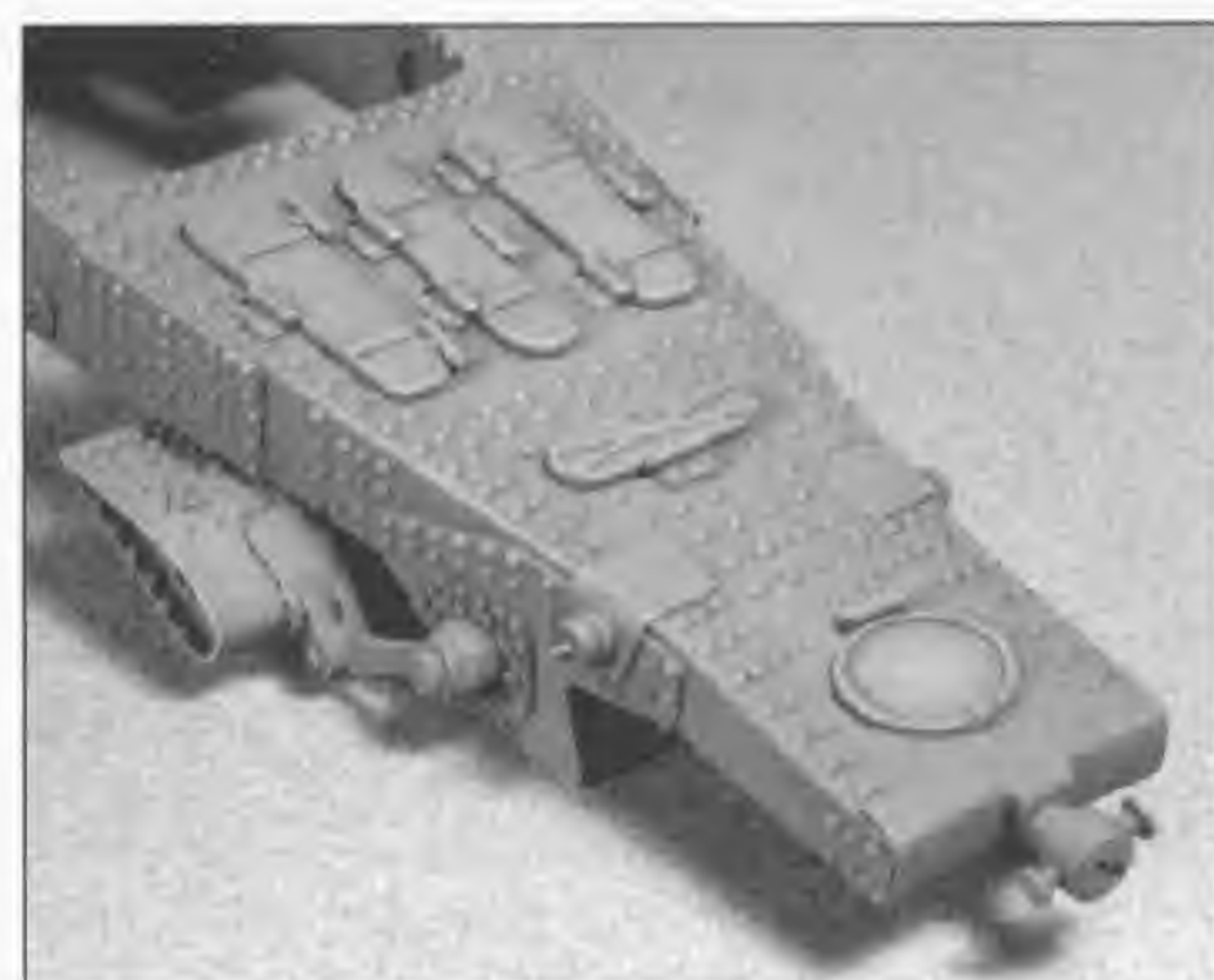
*The right and left sides of the weapon. These two photos show off the profusion of details on this part of the model. The footstands and seats really finish it off.*



*The loading tray. I couldn't resist adding a bit of wire and a hook to hang it from the crane!*



*Left below: the gun breech and the loading platforms. Bottom left: the highly detailed back end of the carriage. Below: the completed winch assembly. Right: the right hand track sponson.*



left the barrel and the sponsons off for painting as well as the seat assemblies.

I like to prime the metal and brass parts before painting. It seems to help these parts tolerate the weathering process a little better. I use Testor Model Master primer. I painted my model overall dark Soviet green.

I didn't paint the outside of my tracks. All of the photos I have seen (which ain't many) showed the track surfaces as bare, worn metal. Nothing looks more like metal... than metal. I wrapped a single piece of masking tape around each during painting. I painted the insides with a rusty brown color. I gave the whole model (including the tracks)



a wash of thinned oil paint when it was dry. It would be a cryin' shame not to drybrush all those rivets and I practically couldn't wait to get at them.

I drybrushed with progressively lighter shades of green and then used some light tan around the lower portions of the carriage. I drybrushed steel on some of the parts I thought would see additional wear and tear.

I added the sponsons (which really don't even need glue) and the barrel. The seats were somewhat heavy, so I glued them on with the carriage tipped on its side. When the glue dried, they were fine. Pastels finished the job.

## Conclusions

This kit is sort of the ultimate cottage industry kit. It contains all of the materials seen in these types of products. I like the approach the masterbuilder took towards engineering the model. All of the dissimilar materials went together surprisingly well.

It wasn't the easiest kit to build, but the level of detail throughout more than made up for it. DO NOT be scared off by all the various materials. It'll help if you're familiar with basics of detailing an armor model. All the techniques used are the same.

If you decide to tackle this project, you just might end up with a show winner on

your hands. I felt almost like I was finishing someone else's scratchbuilding project.

It's nice to see that with the large number of plastic kits coming out, some cottage industry manufacturers are still pushing their medium a little further out ahead.

As detailed as the kit is, there are still things you could add. I have photos of the Aberdeen gun which I took a few years ago when I thought I might like to scratchbuild it myself (yea, right). In these photos, the weapon was covered with all kinds of teeny little fittings, bolts, wires and screws. The superdetailer could have a field day.

The negatives are few. The most annoying thing was that some of the photos in the instructions were vague as were their captions. I was also disappointed that no ammunition was available. I did get an earlier kit and this may have since changed.

As to the accuracy, I couldn't find much when comparing it to the reference photos. About the only thing I noticed was some variation in the barrel design. However, this area also differed from photo to photo, so the kit could be correct for all I know.

So, if you have the budget for resin kits and you'd like to try something very unique, this one's for you. ☒

—Ken Dugan

## MMiR RECCE

**MB Models 203mm Tracked Howitzer. Kit number 1103.** Purchased from the manufacturer. Price was \$115.00.

### References

*There not a whole heck of a lot. Here's what I found:*

*The Great Patriotic War*, by Peter G. Tsouras. Presido Press. This is a pretty good book if you're interested in this theater of the war. It only contains one photo of the 203, on page 131. This shows the gun in action, with all the rounds and cradles around it, sometime in 1944. This book is available from Squadron Mail Order.

*Tank Magazine*, 1992 Vol. 15, No. 5. This issue contains an article and photos of the modern version, the S0-203. This is sort of like the grandnephew of the 203. Also contains photos of WWII vintage 203's and pictures of the wheeled version. A little hard to come by, check your local shop or club.



The big guy seen in action on the Moscow front in late 1941. One seat has a unique canvas cover as does the winch. This is fairly common in wartime photos of the 203. The seat covers probably made the seats a bit more bearable to sit on in freezing weather. In this shot you can also see how the track surfaces show no paint. This is precisely like a modern day bulldozer seen on a construction site.

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Actung Panzer? No...

# Yo! Jagdpanzer



**B**y 1944 the war was going badly for Germany. The allies were equipping their combat units with better armor and in greater numbers. Hitler realizing he was losing the qualitative edge he'd had early in the war, requested a review of all Stug III/IV and Panzerjager vehicles. He had just viewed the first photos of a new Panzerjager mounting the 7.5cm L/70 gun, the same gun used in the Panther. This up-gunned Panzerjager was to be his highest priority to regain parity with allied firepower.

Vomag and Alkett both built versions of the new Panzerjager. In an effort to speed the new tank into service, Vomag developed an interim solution or Zwischen-Lösung to make use of the available Panzer IV/J chassis at Alkett. Several distinctive features characterized the new Panzerjagers the most prominent being the long L/70 gun. The main

difference between the Vomag and Alkett versions was the raised and boxy fighting compartment of the Alkett vehicle. Some versions of the Alkett vehicle used three return rollers per side instead of four, and steel road wheels on the first four wheels. The steel wheels were a necessity due to the increased weight up front from the new, longer gun. This nose-heavy appearance is what gave rise to their nickname, Guderian Ducks.

Although the vehicle and new gun proved a success, the tanks nose-heavy attitude made steering difficult even on the best terrain. Alkett completed a total of 278 vehicles between August '44 and March '45. These vehicles first saw action in the Ardennes and were heavily employed through the remaining months of the war.

#### The Kit

The DML kit represents an late-model Alkett Panzerjager IV L/70 (A). It differs outwardly quite a bit from the Vomag

Panzerjager IV L/70 (V). Unlike that vehicle, the Alkett vehicle is noticeably boxy with a taller fighting compartment, and it lacks the added armor in front and around the engine deck.

The kit continues along DML's recent 43-45 theme that has already given us the Maus, Nashorn, JS-II and Hummel but with one notable exception, PHOTO-ETCH! The best features of the kit by far are the late style individual track links (which greatly add to the accuracy of this kit), the photo-etch and the screen schurtzen.

The sprues are nicely molded with very little flash. Except for only a few minor exceptions, the kit's accuracy is quite good. There's two things I didn't get. Number one being the molded-on wrenches on the rear of the fighting compartment. Why go lengths to produce a nice kit, but mold wrenches onto the fighting compartment? The second is the molded shut loader's hatch. This is especially curious, because DML's Waffen SS Tank





*Above left: that mysterious hatch. The other details evident are all very nicely done. Above right: the two different types of roadwheels. Regular on the left and the all steel versions used on the front bogie assemblies to compensate for the extra weight of the superstructure and gun.*

crew of last year was depicted in a Zwischen-Losung—with both hatches open.

One possible explanation could be that the kit is based on the surviving example now kept at the Saumur Armor Museum in France. This vehicle was captured after being popped open by an Allied shell. The shell's entrance may very well have blown off the right-hand hatch, damaging or destroying it and its mechanism. The Saumur vehicle has a plate bolted in just like the model. I guess you can't fault them for being true to the original!

Whatever the case, I am fairly certain that the hatch should function. For the sake of a "straight from the box review," I left

mine alone. You may want to filch one from the Tamiya L/70 for your model.

#### **Getting Started...**

Assembly was straight forward and the fit was good for the most part. The fighting compartment is constructed close to how the real vehicle was built. The joint formed on the front of the fighting compartment and the lower vertical piece wasn't tight, so some minor filling was required. I also added a weld seam at this joint that appears on the real vehicle. The joint between the two pieces of the rear fighting compartment fit well but needed a weld seam to make it accurate.

One strange thing was the way the

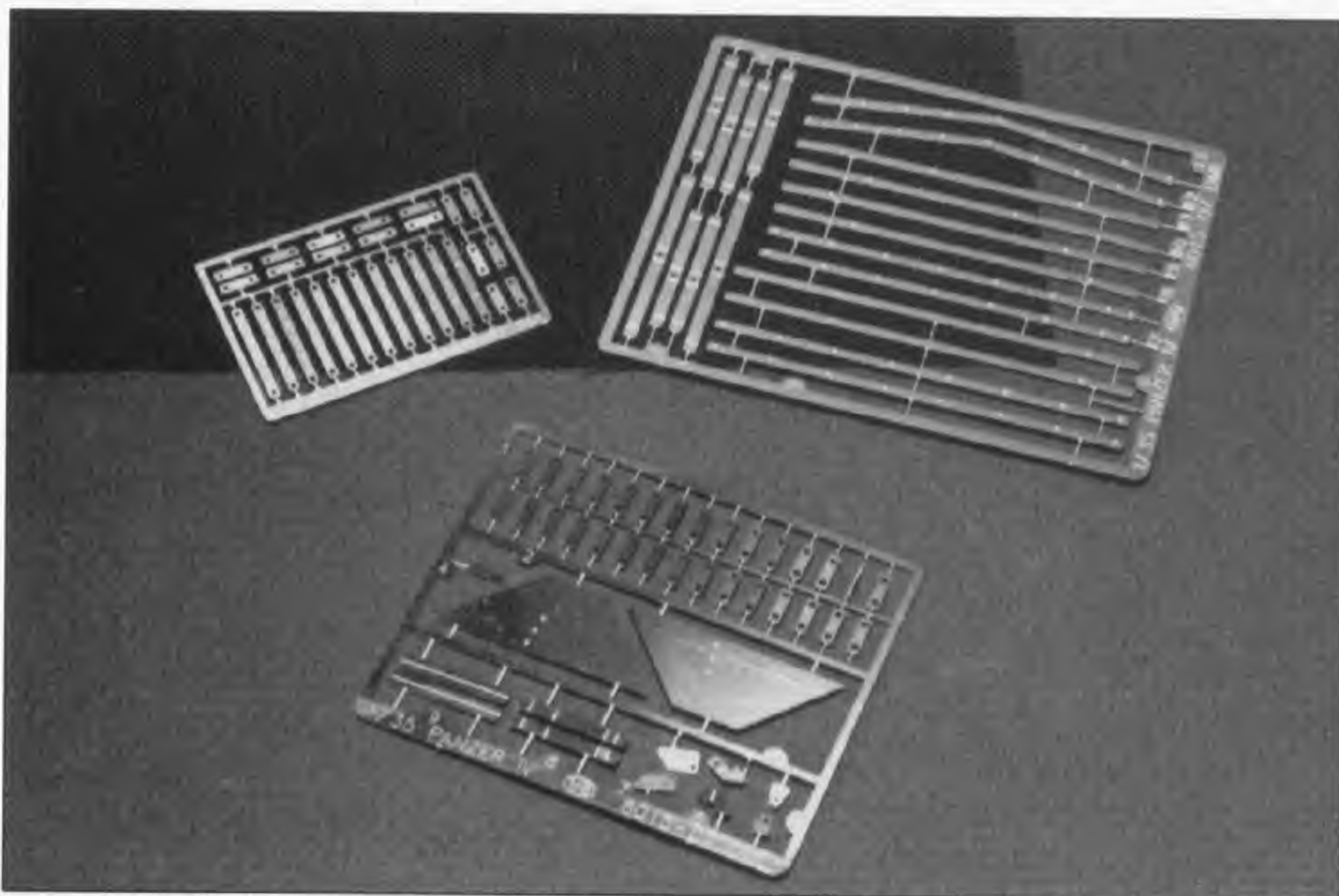
mantlet was engineered. I built mine per the instructions so the gun could move but after test fitting the assembly with the gun attached, I found that it couldn't support the weight of the gun. I had to glue the gun in place or face the shame of having a limp weapon.

Another minor problem area was the rear hull. Like the Italeri PZR IV kit, this kit had pesky knock-out pin marks on the detailed side of the rear hull, (part no. B-31) which had to be filled and sanded out.

With those problems corrected, I really got busy! The lower hull is nicely detailed with access plates and escape hatches molded in. I assembled the road wheels, which by the way are the later style with the bolts around the inner edge.

There is an option not mentioned in the instructions that can be done at this point. As mentioned earlier, some Zwischen-Losungs had four return rollers while some had three. It's up to you which style you choose to model, but know which you want to do before you remove the location markings for the fourth return roller. Don't rely on the location points on the hull for placement of the return rollers. Use your reference material to ensure correct placement.

No locator holes for the pioneer tools are given on the detailed side of the engine deck, but they can be located and drilled out from the inside. I chose not to drill the holes out but to mark the location of each locator hole with a pencil and attach the parts accordingly. This eliminated any visible holes and didn't mar any detail.



*The excellent photo-etched parts provided in the kit. A very welcome addition. All of the parts are for the side skirts. In the background is the mesh for the skirts.*





*The left side showing all of the photo-etched goodies installed. Note the forward, solid skirt section.*

### Schurtzen To Die For...

The photo-etch parts and the schurtzen hangers are the most challenging part of the whole kit and took approximately a third of total time used to build the kit. All total this assembly involves over 80 parts, including the photo-etch. The instruction sheet is a little vague on where some of these brackets are to go. Location points are molded on the kit to help locate some of the attachment points. The most troublesome of these parts were the small plastic and photo-etch parts that attach to the fenders and hull sides. The instructions here are pretty weak, but I winged it by placing each lower hanger evenly spaced below the upper hangers.

Almost all the photo-etch supplied is used for the mesh side-skirts. The frets are nicely etched with crisp details. Bending templates are given for nearly all the etched parts in the kit, a nice touch, but you still need to be careful on where each part is placed. I had a little problem getting the hangers level and aligned with the brackets on the hull sides. I chose to follow the instructions and attach the rail to the hull brackets, then attach the screens. Another alternative would be to assemble the screens and rails first and then attach the whole assembly to the hull sides. The little glitch I

had with doing it per the instructions is that the small pins on each of the 30 hangers are just a bit too fat to go through the screen easily. To keep from continuously braking off the rail, I cut them off and super-glued the screen in place then placed the photo-etch piece on top.

The mesh for the side skirts is really nice. It's thick and fairly stiff, giving it a realistic scale appearance on the model. The only drawback I can find to them is that they're too flexible. Metal screen might be harder to work with, but it could be bent and battered to give a more realistic appearance.

One note to add a little detail—I drilled out the ends of each schurtzen hanger. This was a tubular steel bar on the real vehicle, but is a solid piece in the kit.

Another little bit of detail that's easy to add, is a weld seam around the front tow shackles and the lifting hooks. To make weld beads, I simply glue a length of stretched sprue to the area where the bead will go using a glue like Tenax-7 or Plastruct. I let this cure for a few minutes then bounce a hot knife with a number 11 blade along the sprue line. Once this is finished, I paint the new weld seam with some more of the same glue to soften the edges.

With the schurtzen and added details completed, it's on to the tracks.

### Back On Track

Individual track links can be a royal pain, but let's face it, they add something to the model that you just can't get with band-type tracks. To make assembling the track a bit easier, here are some ideas you may want to try. I like to assemble individual tracks in sections that I can set aside and put together once the model is all painted. I made a simple jig with some sheet plastic and got busy. The jig helps in the assembly process and keeps the track straight while its being pieced together. I assembled two sections each of a upper string, lower string and for each drive sprocket and idler. The tracks fit well over the drive sprocket and didn't require any adjusting, but some clean-up was required on each track link to remove flash caused by the sprue. I recommend using Tenax-7 or a similar slow-setting cement on the tracks so they can be bent while being fit around the drive sprocket and idler. It also helps in getting that sag over the return rollers.

With the track sections completed, the next step was painting. I decided to give my Zwis the common ambush scheme seen late in the war.

I started by painting the entire tank flat black, then followed this with a mixture of Tamiya dark yellow and a little flat black. This was sprayed on in a cloud pattern that allowed some of the black to show through. Next came two lighter coats of dark yellow, again applying it in a cloud pattern. The purpose of letting some of the black show through is to give depth to the surfaces.

With the dark yellow completed, the next step was to apply the Tamiya dark green and red-brown. I thinned these paints a little more than usual and test sprayed to achieve the desired flow. Apply these colors in uneven, wavering bands that continue across the tank from one point to another. Using the painting instructions helps visualize this for you.

After both colors were applied, I went back with a brush and applied the ambush speckling. Once the paint was dry, I sprayed a coat of clear Future floor wax and applied the decals. Last came the weathering. I usually use a wash, but decided to use pastel chalks this time. I ground up some black and orange chalks and mixed them into a grimy rust-black color and applied this to all the recessed areas with a round brush. Larger, flat areas were treated the same way only using a wider flat brush. The end result is a subtle, weathered appearance.

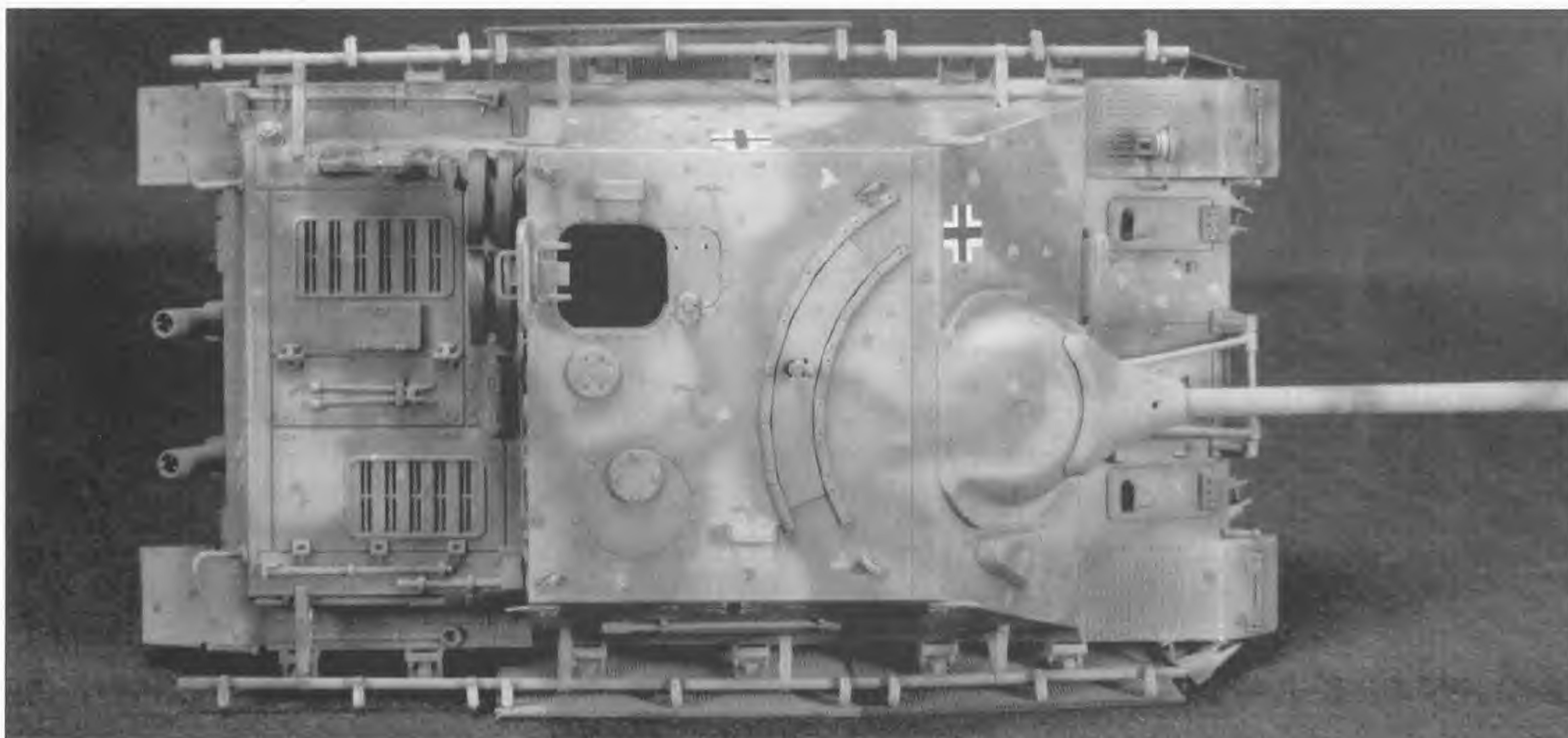
I'm fairly impressed with DML's Zwis. In my humble opinion, it's the most detailed and





*Left: the rear deck and hull. Even though the two spanners on either side of the cross were molded on, they're not really all that noticeable when the model is finished. More of the skirt hardware is noticeable here. Also notice the straight exhaust pipes which were common on this vehicle and the Panzer IV J.*

*Below: the view from above. all of the details looked pretty good when all was done. The late-war ambush scheme comes off pretty well on this vehicle.*



accurate kit they've released yet. For the price of \$29 you can't really beat it, the photo-etch alone would probably cost you \$15, and it really does a lot to add to the accuracy and scale appearance of the vehicle. Like any kit, this one's not perfect and can benefit from a few added details like the ones I've mentioned. If you've never worked with photo-etch before, this would be a good kit to start with since these metal parts are fairly simple and straightforward to use.

The kit builds into a very nice replica of the Zwis and one I feel most German armor buffs will want to add to their collections. 🚀

—Tom Jett

## MMiR RECCE

**DML Panzer IV L/70(A) SdKfz 162/2.** Kit number 6015. Purchased from Squadron mail order: 1115 Crowley Drive, Carrollton, Texas 75011. Price was \$29.98, no sales tax, \$3.75 shipping charge. Payment by credit card (via fax: 214-242-3775), delivery time was approximately two weeks.

### References

*Panzers in Saumur, No. 2* Art Box Co, Ltd. Very good coverage of the L/70 currently preserved at the Musée des Blindés in Saumur, France. Lots of great shots of the Zwis inside and out. The photos show the shot-up vehicle mentioned in the text. There are particularly good shots of the exterior details. Sketches of the later model vehicles as well. Excellent drawings of the mesh side skirt mounting points and other details. Check for Panzers in Saumur at your local hobby shop or RZM Imports.

*Panzer IV & Its Variants* Schiffer Publishing. You know, the English version. Contains an interesting discussion of the tank's development and photos of the vehicles under construction. Also contains info on the Pz IV J which can be helpful.



# Mini Men

## Kirin

### Soviet Aerosan Crew Kit Number 25015

THIS TWO-FIGURE SET IS DESIGNED FOR KIRIN'S soon to be released Aerosan motorized ski sled. The Aerosan was a wacky sled powered by an old aircraft engine that was used by the Russians for mobile reconnaissance during the snowbound winter months.

The set is composed of two figures, one being the driver and the other riding shotgun and manning the vehicle's only weapon; the PPSH machine gun.

The set is pretty simple. Each is sculpted by Mike Good, whose reputation for quality is well known. Both are sculpted wearing winter clothing. The driver wears the heavy padded jacket and this item is very well done, the details of the quilts being very crisp and well defined. He also wears the unique trigger mittens with the separate finger. On his head, he wears a budionovka (or shlem) which is a very goofy looking pointed hat originally introduced in 1936 and still seen in the early years of the war.

The second figure is dressed in a sheepskin coat called a shuba. This was a popular item amongst Soviet troops and it was worn by both infantry and mechanized troops. He wears heavy gloves and sports the familiar flapped fleece cap called a shapka-ushanka. This cap was introduced in 1940 to replace the shlem/budionovka, so this dates the set to around that time. The quality of the second figure is equal to the first, the detail of the fleece hat and collar being especially crisp and clean.

The only complaint on the set was present on this second figure, where a small chunk of resin had obscured the left eye of the casting. This is caused when a previous casting pulls a small piece of rubber out of the mold. The remaining void then fills with resin and all subsequent castings show this defect.

This is a small annoyance at best, but it's a shame to have to have Mr. Good's fine work marred like this.

However, we still think this set would be an excellent addition to your collection. While looking great in the Aerosan, they'd look equally good in the GAZ jeep, posed around a tank or, with a little modification, in the jump seats on either side of the MB Models' 203 howitzer.

The set retails for \$14.98 and this is competitive with other resin sets on the market. Look for these wherever Kirin products are sold.

## DML

### Soviet Motor Rifle Troops (Berlin 1945) Kit Number 6019

DML CONTINUES TO FILL IN many of the missing pieces in the existing figure line with this latest release. This is the first WWII Soviet infantry set since the Tamiya set of the early seventies (ooo-scary).

This particular set is composed of two Ivans riding the back of a JS and two back on the ground. The original intent of the set is no doubt to hitch a ride on DML's JS series of kits. To this end they would work well. Of course, all the figures could easily be adapted for use all on

the ground or all on a tank.

Two of the figures are dressed in padded winter jackets, while the other two are dressed; one in a summer tunic (?) and the other in the ubiquitous Soviet greatcoat. This inconsistency makes the set all the more versatile in our minds, as there was a tremendous variety in Soviet uniforms by the war's end.

The quality throughout this set is as we have come to expect in all of the recent DML sets. Lots of extra goodies are included like canteens, entrenching tools, grenades and gas mask bags. This last item was widely used as an all purpose musette-type bag by Soviet infantrymen (and women). This is the only set ever to provide many of these items—and the quality on all is spot-on.

One of the things we always look forward to in these sets are the weapons. This set comes with both the PPSH sub machine gun and the Mosin-Nagant rifle. This is the first time the Nagant has been done in plastic. The weapons are just superb and are probably the best part of the set. There is a choice of two different types of magazines for the PPSH, the drum type and the "banana" type. Cartridge cases are provided for each as well.

We've noticed that often DML includes one particular character head. In this case, one of the crouching figs sports a big outrageous handlebar mustache. Perhaps he aspires to be a Cossack? Definitely one you'll want to spend some careful time painting.

Got a lonely JS? Go get him some company! Thumbs up on this one.

For reference check out *Red Army Uniforms* described in the Short Takes section right here in this very mag.

### U.S. Rangers Normandy 1944 Kit Number 6021

THIS SET WAS ANNOUNCED BACK IN JUNE TO coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the D-Day landings. As the name implies, the set is composed of troops outfitted specifically as they would have been for the Pont du Hoc raid. If this doesn't ring a bell, this was the ill-fated raid to destroy large coastal guns just prior to the actual landings. The Rangers scaled large cliff faces inflicting and sustaining substantial casualties. They secured the cliff, only to find that the guns had been located further inland and were not operational. In spite of this setback, the Rangers (along with the 29th Infantry) went on to pretty much kick the butts of the German 352nd division that had been

Aerosan Crew





## Soviet Motor Rifle Troops



creating so much havoc on the beach.

The set depicts the standard U.S. uniforms of the period, with the addition

of all the specialized assault gear designed for the landings. All wear the basic M41 jacket, wool pants and gaiters.

All are posed in action and are sculpted (appropriately) looking up. The animation and poses are good, with some fine work accomplished on the faces. All of the figures come with the steel pot helmets, although

one has the option of the knit jeep cap. Two of the four wear the U.S. assault vest. This was a thin shell vest with

extra pockets on the chest and around the front for extra ammo and other necessities. It also had a built-in back pack. This is a very interesting item, as it was rarely seen in the field after the landings. It was also issued to the 29th for the landings, but it was considered everyone to be hot, heavy and generally a big pain in the patooty. The pack is molded as separate item in the kit, so make sure to attend to the very slight gap that is present after its attachment. This is also the case with the pouch on the lower back of the vest and the chest pockets.

All the figures wear the M26 life preserver belt. This was a Navy item that would have been quickly discarded as well.

Among the other specialized items are a Bangalore torpedo tube and several additional grenade bags. The torpedo tube was assembled in sections and used to clear strong points or obstacles. The tube provided in the kit is a bit on the small side, but this can be easily remedied with a spare hunk of plastic rod.

There is a full complement of gear for

each GI. M1928 haversacks are provided for the two guys without the vests. Each of these dudes also gets a M1910 T-handle shovel with a M1942 first-aid kit attached to the top. A common configuration at Normandy. Two of the later pattern M1943 entrenching tools are also provided. M5 gas mask bags are provided for each, and these are shown on the boxtop worn both on the chest and on the hip, which is correct. The bags are all depicted with their waterproof covers and this is a very nice detail. Just make sure you don't pilfer these for use on a later war figure, as the covers were chucked after the landings.

There are some extra bits to add too, like cartridge cases, bayonets and bandage pouches.

This brings us to the weapons. DML doesn't disappoint in this department. Provided are: M1 Garand rifle, with and without grenade launcher; a Thompson sub-machine gun, with a standard magazine; and a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR). All are very well none, especially the BAR which has the characteristic "heft" this weapon was known for.

Now that we have the Paratroops and the Rangers, we want some regular infantry sets! We'd love to see just the basic post-Normandy GI, a tank crew, some winter dress dog faces and how about those camyclad engineers seen after the landings? We're keeping our fingers crossed.

For reference see the Motor Book title: *The World War II GI in Color Photographs* discussed in the front of this issue.

## Red Devils Arnhem 1944

### Kit Number 6023

THIS SET HAS BEEN LONG ANTICIPATED BY THE STAFF here at MMR. There never has been a worthwhile set of British Paras available. The old ESCI set was just plain bad. Always back, you could pick up some not quite so bad examples from Valiant Miniatures, but these were in 1/32nd scale and there were only two different types available.

Well this sad situation has suddenly changed with the introduction of this excellent set from DML. The set represents four Red Devils (thus named by the Germans due less to their headgear than to their ferocious fighting skills) amongst the rubble of Arnhem. The boxtop art is the usual fantastic Ron Volstad illustration and it even shows the infamous Arnhem bridge in the background.

All of the figures are shown in prone positions except for one, who is sort of creeping around a corner with his Sten gun.

## U.S. Rangers





## Arnhem Paras



Two of the figures make up a two man PIAT team and the last is brandishing a Bren gun.

Each figure is dressed in the Denison jump smock and each is provided with all the standard British kit items. The rectangular chest ammo pouches (excitingly called Basic Pouch Mark III by the British) backpacks and entrenching tool pouches are all present. Two different types of canteens are provided along with extra grenades and "pig sticker" bayonets.

Two of the Rot Teufels carry unique equipment items assigned for their specific tasks. The Bren gunner is provided with

the spare parts wallet for his gun and the PIAT man gets the PIAT bomb carrying case. This latter item was simply three cardboard tubes strapped together. These tubes are considerably larger than the bombs due to the internal padding present in them to cushion on the drop.

As we've come to expect, the weapons are unbelievably good. The weapons in all the new sets are so good it's almost boring. We're getting spoiled with all this great stuff. We have to keep going to our Thesaurus to get new adjectives to describe them! Represented are: the Sten gun; the Bren gun, a SMLE Mark I rifle and the PIAT. The PIAT is an anti-tank weapon (Projectile Infantry Anti-tank) while the Sten gun was the standard British sub-machine gun during the war. The Bren gun was the British answer to heavy machine gun and it was issued one to a platoon. The weapons are exquisitely molded, the Bren in particular. As a matter of fact, it's the nicest one we've ever seen. So nice in fact that one of our staffers bought five sets, just for the Bren gun!

The entire set is designed to work as a

group and all of the figures look great posed together. There's really nothing in the set that absolutely nails them down as Arnhem paras. You could easily use them for a Normandy dio. There is one option for the PIAT gunner—a choice of either the helmet or the famous red beret.

You're gonna love this set. We highly recommend it to all aficionados of the period.

For references we suggest the superb *Militaria Magazine* special number 59/60: *Berets Rouges En Normandie*. This is an unbelievably thorough examination of all the weapons, uniforms and equipment of late war British Paras. The only drawback is that it's all in French. The good news is that it is available within a larger English volume called *The Soldiers of D-Day* and this is available from RZM Imports. If you're on a budget, the Osprey Elite Series book; *The Paras British Airborne Forces 1940-1984* contains terrific color plates and photos of Red Devils.

If you really want to understand the Arnhem battle, there is no greater book on the subject than Cornelius Ryan's *A Bridge Too Far*. This is not only meticulously researched, but it really captures the tone and feel of the times and the battle. Mr. Ryan was a correspondent during the war and he drew upon his many contacts from the conflict while writing this book in the late sixties. Find it at your local bookstore—it is available in paperback.

## German Infantry Battle of the Hedgerows 1994 Kit Number 6025

YET ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF 50TH ANNIVERSARY releases, this set depicts German troops on the "Ruckmarsch" during the Normandy Battles. The name would suggest troops dug in fighting positions, but what you get is four figures; all in drastically different uniforms and on the march. This would have been fairly typical as various German units moved back from the pulverized battlefields of Northern France in 1944.

What you get is two basic infantrymen: one in the standard M43 uniform and one wearing the Army pattern camo smock (distinguished from the SS smock by its hood). The third figure is an officer in his "dress-field" uniform while the fourth figure is uniquely depicted as a wounded Panzer crewman. This is a cool addition as many crewmen, after losing their mounts, were forced to fight the long retreat alongside their infantry buddies.

## German Infantry





Each figure is posed as if having experienced a long fight and the boxtop shows a pretty motley bunch. The infantryman in the smock hangs his head and the Panzer crewman casts a wary eye upward. Maybe he's worried the same planes that took his tank will return for him!

There's nothing in the set that we haven't come to expect from DML. All the poses and molding are top notch. As we've said before, the quality rivals resin or metal. The heads especially. The infantryman in the smock has what is arguably the nicest facial sculpting on any 1/35th scale figure we've ever seen (again!). He actually looks worried, complete with knitted brow and tussled hair. The Panzer crewman also has a very convincing expression.

Full gear is provided for the two infantrymen, while the officer carries a machine pistol, binocular case and a hand grenade. The Panzer crewman carries machine pistol slung over his unhurt shoulder. Two different infantry weapons are provided: the standard Kar 92 rifle and the Gewehr semi-automatic rifle. The weapons are the same quality as in all previous sets. You could also supplement the gear provided with items from DML's excellent WWII German Infantry Equipment, Set 1 (Kit Number 3807).

Combine any of these guys with the other German WWII sets from DML and you'd have yourself quite a diorama.

We highly recommend this set, not only to build as is, but also to snatch those cool looking heads!

For reference we always suggest Andrew Mollo's *The Armed Forces of World War II, Uniforms, insignia and organization*. We also suggest the new *German Soldiers of World War Two*, which is a compilation of all the Militaria Magazine articles on the WWII German Army reprinted in English. Available from your local Hobbyshop or RZM Imports.

## Hornet

We are beginning to see more activity from Hornet. We are reviewing three subjects here which are the start of several new items from the workshop of figure-meister Roger Saunders.

The first of the new items is labeled as a Panzergrenadier WWII (GH19). The subject is dressed in the one-piece camouflage overalls and is shown in a casual pose with his weapon at the ready and a cigarette in his hand. He is also wearing a full complement

of infantry gear, including breadbag, cartridge cases, gas mask canister, canteen and mess tin. He is minus the web gear Y-harness, and wears all his gear hung from his belt, which was a preferred arrangement in the field. His headgear the standard M43 side cap.

The second figure is also dressed in the camy overalls and has all the same equipment as GH19. In addition, he carries an entrenching tool and is equipped with a Y-harness. His head gear is a helmet with a camouflage cover.

If you're a regular reader of this column, you'll know that Hornet miniatures are among our most favorite. So we'll dispense with the normal litany of complements that usually accompany a Hornet review. Suffice it to say, we like 'em! The standard of quality in castings is quite high and the fit of all the parts is near perfect.

The one point worth mentioning, is that these two items are basically conversions of earlier releases. This is not a drawback in our opinion. One of the great attributes of the Hornet line is its tremendous conversion

potential. Having similar items means that you have a greater variety of starting points.

And speaking of conversions... The simple removal of the button front of each of these figures just below the belt line creates the look of the Fallschirmjäger uniform commonly seen in the Italian theater. Specifically, the uniform worn during the summer offensives of 1943. Many of the troops were seen wearing shirt-sleeves and large baggy pants.

This little digression is a (not too obvious) segue way to our next review subject: a set of resin Fallschirmjäger heads (GH06). The set is composed of five heads all in a variety of expressions and helmet configurations. All the helmets are the cut-down paratroops version, but each is unique; with and without straps and cloth covers.

The Hornet line is available through U.S. distributors. If your local hobby shop doesn't stock the line, tell them to contact The Right Stuff Distributors in California. The Right Stuff does NO retail sales but they will supply your local hobby shop. ☺



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